policy REVIEW

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The Reagan Years

Ronald Reagan In His Own Words
His Greatest Speeches

Completing the Reagan Revolution
William J. Bennett

He Rebuilt the Presidency
Edwin J. Feulner Jr.

One Hundred Conservative Victories
Adam Meyerson

Reagan's Big Ten
Burton Yale Pines

His Place in History
Stephen E. Ambrose, M. E. Bradford, Alonzo L. Hamby, Forrest McDonald, George H. Nash, James Nuechterlein, Karl O'Lessker

Commemorative Issue

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The Best of Ronald Reagan's Speeches 2 **The Great Rejuvenator**
Ronald Reagan's Greatest Speeches

Adam Meyerson 8 **One Hundred Conservative Victories**
The Reagan Years

Edwin J. Feulner Jr. 14 **Morning in America**
Reagan Rebuilt the Presidency

Burton Yale Pines 16 **The Ten Legacies of Ronald Reagan**
Prosperity at Home, Peace Abroad

Stephen E. Ambrose
M. E. Bradford
Alonzo L. Hamby
Forrest McDonald
George H. Nash
James Nuechterlein
Karl O'Lessker 21 **How Great Was Ronald Reagan?**
Our 40th President's Place in History

William J. Bennett 28 **Completing the Reagan Revolution**
Where Do We Go From Here?

Publisher
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The Great Rejuvenator

Ronald Reagan's Greatest Speeches

To call President Reagan the Great Communicator is to trivialize the message he communicated, and to misunderstand the profound influence of his speeches on America and the world. Mr. Reagan, of course, made the most of his Hollywood and his radio training; he was a star performer on the presidential podium. But his effectiveness as a speaker depended on much more than his brilliant choice of speechwriters and his masterful delivery. After all, countless other politicians can read a teleprompter as skillfully and inspirationally as he.

Our oldest president was really the Great Rejuvenator. Ronald Reagan made America feel young again, with its mission in history uncompleted and its greatest accomplishments yet to come. He did so mostly through policies that have restored America's economic growth and military strength. But through his rhetoric, he also reawakened his countrymen's commitment to simple American principles that somehow had been forgotten in the 1960s and 1970s. President Reagan reestablished what America stands for, and, as important, what it stands against. And he gave Americans renewed confidence that, in a world of evil, their principles of liberty and popular government will prevail.

The following collection of excerpts from some of President Reagan's greatest speeches is divided into three sections.

The first is from his speeches about America, "this blessed land" of faith and freedom and charity and opportunity. Inheriting an economic crisis from Jimmy Carter, President Reagan put the blame on the departure from the American democratic tradition, on a government that had "grown beyond the consent of the governed." The president was never very precise about what exactly the federal government should not be doing, but with his constant emphasis on "we the people," he undermined the legitimacy of special-interest programs that do not enjoy widespread public support, and he identified the conservative principle of limited government with the American mainstream. His themes of American heroism and of a "golden door" for immigrants stood in sharp contrast to the "malaise" speeches of his predecessor, and have been adopted without attribution—the highest compliment—by Governor Dukakis.

The second section is about the titanic conflict of our times, the conflict of freedom against totalitarianism. The sophisticates who ridiculed the "evil empire" speech never criticized the president for calling Nazism evil in Germany or for calling racism evil before an audience of southern white conservatives. But his assessment is nonetheless accurate in all three cases: there is still right and wrong in the modern world, and Communism is currently the most dangerous embodiment of evil.

There was no jingoism or bellicosity in the president's case for a strong military, including strategic defenses. Instead there was the commonsense argument, never expressed more eloquently, that in a world of tyrants the democracies must remain armed if they are to remain free and at peace, and that the best protection against war is the moral courage of free peoples willing to defend themselves.

What is most striking about the president's speeches on Communism is his confidence that freedom will prevail, that it is the Soviet Union "that runs against the tide of history." To help move history along, he has gone on the rhetorical offensive against Communism, taking his message of liberty even to the bosom of the enemy. His speeches to the students of Moscow and Shanghai may read like cliched civics textbooks to Americans, but his words of liberty and genuine people's republicanism will reverberate for decades in the Communist world. Despite occasional naive comments about Soviet change under Gorbachev, the president's rallying cry for freedom in Moscow alone justified the summit.

The third section is on the great moral issues confronting America at home. Mr. Reagan was the first president to address that terrible "wound in our national conscience," abortion on demand. His speeches on the tragedy of family breakdown and the permanence of dependency on welfare have helped reshape public debate about how government can best help the poor.

Like Jefferson, Lincoln, and the other great framers of the American rhetorical tradition, President Reagan was guided through all his speeches by a deep faith in Providence. His optimism about the future was grounded in his conviction that God wants man to be free, and that He will deliver good from evil. It is this faith that ultimately made President Reagan the Great Rejuvenator. "Come," said the president in London in June 1988 when he returned from Moscow, "it is not too late to seek a newer world."

—Adam Meyerson

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THIS BLESSED LAND

The Crisis of Overgovernment

These United States are confronted with an economic affliction of great proportions.

We suffer from the longest and one of the worst sustained inflations in our national history. It distorts our economic decisions, penalizes thrift, and crushes the struggling young and the fixed-income elderly alike. It threatens to shatter the lives of millions of our people.

Idle industries have cast workers into unemployment, human misery, and personal indignity. Those who do work are denied a fair return for their labor by a tax system which penalizes successful achievement and keeps us from maintaining full productivity....

In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem.

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981

We are a nation that has a government—not the other way around. And this makes us special among the nations of the earth.

Our government has no power except that granted to it by the people. It is time to check and reverse the growth of government which shows signs of having grown beyond the consent of the governed.

It is my intention to curb the size and influence of the federal establishment and to demand recognition of the distinction between the powers granted to the federal government and those reserved to the states or to the people.

All of us—all of us need to be reminded that the federal government did not create the states; the states created the federal government.

Now, so there will be no misunderstanding, it's not my intention to do away with government. It is rather to make it work—work with us, not over us; to stand by our side, not ride on our back. Government can and must provide opportunity, not smother it; foster productivity, not stifle it.

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981

It wasn't long ago that we looked out on a different land—locked factory gates and long gasoline lines, intolerable prices and interest rates turning the greatest country on earth into a land of broken dreams. Government growing beyond our consent had become a lumbering giant, slamming shut the gates of opportunity, threatening to crush the very roots of our freedom.

What brought America back? The American people brought us back—with quiet courage and common sense; with undying faith that in this nation under God the future will be ours, for the future belongs to the free.

State of the Union Address, February 4, 1986

American Heroism

Those who say that we're in a time when there are no heroes—they just don't know where to look. You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond.

You meet heroes across a counter—and they're on both sides of that counter. There are entrepreneurs with faith in themselves and faith in an idea who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity.

There are individuals and families whose taxes support the government and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art, and education. Their patriotism is quiet but deep. Their values sustain our national life.

Now I have used the words "they" and "their" in speaking of these heroes. I could say "you" and "your" because I'm addressing the heroes of whom I speak—you, the citizens of this blessed land.

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981

If we look to the answer as to why for so many years we achieved so much, prospered as no other people on earth, it was because here in this land we unleashed the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before.

Freedom and the dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other place on earth. The price for this freedom at times has been high, but we have never been unwilling to pay that price.

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981

We're a compassionate people. When the war ended we helped rebuild our allies—and our enemies as well. We did this because we wanted to help the innocent victims of bad governments and bad policies, and because, if they prospered, peace would be more secure.

We're an optimistic people. Like you, we inherited a vast land of endless skies, tall mountains, rich fields, and open prairies. It made us see the possibilities in everything. It made us hopeful. And we devised an economic system that rewarded individual effort, that gave us good reason for hope.

Fudan University, Shanghai, April 30, 1984

America's Golden Door

America is really many Americas. We call ourselves a nation of immigrants, and that's truly what we are. We have drawn people from every corner of the Earth. We're composed of virtually every race and religion, and not in small numbers, but large. We have a statue in New York Harbor that speaks of this—a statue of a woman holding a torch of welcome to those who enter our country to become Americans. She has greeted millions upon millions of immigrants to our country. She welcomes them still. She represents our open door.

All of the immigrants who came to us brought their own music, literature, customs, and ideas. And the marvelous thing, a thing of which we're proud, is they did not have to relinquish these things in order to fit in. In fact, what they brought to America became American. And this diversity has more than enriched us; it has literally shaped us.

Fudan University, Shanghai, April 30, 1984

Just this past Fourth of July, the torch atop the Statue of Liberty was hoisted down for replacement. We can be forgiven for thinking maybe it was just worn out from

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lighting the way to freedom for 17 million new Americans. So now we'll put up a new one.

The poet called Miss Liberty's torch the "lamp beside the golden door." The golden door, that was the entrance to America and it still is. And now you really know why we are here tonight.

The glistening hope of that lamp is still ours. Every promise, every opportunity is still golden in this land. And through that golden door our children can walk tomorrow with the knowledge that no one can be denied the promise that is America.

Her heart is full; her door is still golden, her future bright. She has arms big enough to comfort and strong enough to support. For the strength in her arms is the strength of her people. She will carry on in the '80s unafraid, unashamed, and unsurpassed.

In this springtime of hope, some lights seem eternal; America's is.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

Acceptance Speech, Republican National Convention, August 23, 1984

THE TITANIC CONFLICT

The Evil of Nazism

The lesson of World War II, the one lesson of Nazism, is that freedom must always be stronger than totalitarianism and that good must always be stronger than evil. The moral measure of our two nations will be found in the resolve we show to preserve liberty, to protect life, and to honor and cherish all God's children.

Bitburg Air Base, Federal Republic of Germany, May 5, 1985

Four decades ago we waged a great war to lift the darkness of evil from the world, to let men and women in this country and in every country live in the sunshine of liberty. Our victory was great, and the Federal Republic, Italy, and Japan are now in the community of free nations. But the struggle for freedom is not complete, for today much of the world is still cast in totalitarian darkness.

Twenty-two years ago President John F. Kennedy went to the Berlin Wall and proclaimed that he, too, was a Berliner. Well, today freedom-loving people around the world must say: I am a Berliner, I am a Jew in a world still threatened by anti-Semitism, I am an Afghan, and I am a prisoner of the Gulag, I am a refugee in a crowded boat foundering off the coast of Vietnam, I am a Laotian, a Cambodian, a Cuban, and a Miskito Indian in Nicaragua. I, too, am a potential victim of totalitarianism.

Bitburg Air Base, Federal Republic of Germany, May 5, 1985

The Evil of Racism

There is sin and evil in the world, and we're enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might. Our nation, too, has a legacy of evil with which it must deal. The glory of this land has been its capacity for transcending the moral evils of our past. For example, the long struggle of minority citizens for equal rights, once a source of disunity and civil war, is now a point of pride for all Americans. We must never go back. There is no room for racism, anti-Semitism, or other forms of ethnic and racial hatred in this country.

I know that you've been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice. Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. The commandment given us is clear and simple: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

National Association of Evangelicals, March 8, 1983

We don't lump people by groups or special interests. And, let me add, in the party of Lincoln, there is no room for intolerance and not even a small corner for anti-Semitism or bigotry of any kind. Many people are welcome in our house, but not the bigots.

Acceptance Speech, Republican National Convention, August 23, 1984

The Evil of Communism

Yes, let us pray for the salvation of all of those who live in that totalitarian darkness—pray they will discover the joy of knowing God. But until they do, let us be aware that while they preach the supremacy of the state, declare its omnipotence over individual man, and predict its eventual domination of all peoples on the Earth, they are the focus of evil in the modern world....

So, I urge you to speak out against those who would place the United States in a position of military and moral inferiority. You know, I've always believed that old Screwtape reserved his best efforts for those of you in the church. So, in your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride—the temptation of blithely declaring yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.

National Association of Evangelicals, March 8, 1983

War and Peace

As for the enemies of freedom, those who are potential adversaries, they will be reminded that peace is the highest aspiration of the American people. We will negotiate for it, sacrifice for it, we will not surrender for it—now or ever.

Our forbearance should never be misunderstood. Our reluctance for conflict should not be misjudged as a failure of will.

When action is required to preserve our national security, we will act. We will maintain sufficient strength to prevail if need be, knowing that if we do we have the best chance of never having to use that strength.

Above all we must realize that no arsenal or no weapon in the arsenals of the world is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women.

Inaugural Address, January 20, 1981

Our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, but let it be clear we maintain this strength in the hope it will

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never be used. For the ultimate determinant in the struggle now going on for the world will not be bombs and rockets but a test of wills and ideas—a trial of spiritual resolve: the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated.

British Parliament, June 8, 1982

For the past 20 years we have believed that no war will be launched as long as each side knows it can retaliate with a deadly counterstrike. Well, I believe there is a better way of eliminating the threat of nuclear war.

[The] Strategic Defense Initiative...is the most hopeful possibility of the nuclear age. But it is not well understood.

Some say it will bring war to the heavens—but its purpose is to deter war, in the heavens and on earth. Some say the research would be expensive. Perhaps, but it could save millions of lives, indeed humanity itself. Some say if we build such a system the Soviets will build a defense system of their own. They already have strategic defense that surpasses ours; a civil defense system, where we have almost none; and a research program covering roughly the same areas of technology we're exploring. And finally, some say the research will take a long time. The answer to that is: "Let's get started."

State of the Union Address, February 6, 1985

Respect for human rights is not social work; it is not merely an act of compassion. It is the first obligation of government and the source of its legitimacy.

It is also the foundation stone in any structure of world peace. All through history, it has been the dictatorships and the tyrannies that have surrendered first to the cult of militarism and the pursuit of war. Countries based on the consent of the governed, countries that recognize the unalienable rights of the individual, do not make war on each other. Peace is more than just an absence of war. True peace is justice, true peace is freedom, and true peace dictates the recognition of human rights.

U.N. General Assembly , September 22, 1986

Americans seek always to make friends of old antagonists. After a colonial revolution with Britain, we have cemented for all ages the ties of kinship between our nations. After a terrible civil war between North and South, we healed our wounds and found true unity as a nation. We fought two world wars in my lifetime against Germany and one with Japan, but now the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan are two of our closest allies and friends.

Some people point to the trade disputes between us as a sign of strain, but they're the frictions of all families, and the family of free nations is a big and vital and sometimes boisterous one. I can tell you that nothing would please my heart more than in my lifetime to see American and Soviet diplomats grappling with the problem of trade disputes between America and a growing, exuberant, exporting Soviet Union that had opened up to economic freedom and growth.

Moscow State University, May 31, 1988

People do not make wars, governments do—and no mother would ever willingly sacrifice her sons for territorial gain, for economic advantage, for ideology. A people free to choose will always choose peace.

Moscow State University, May 31, 1988

Nations do not distrust each other because they are armed. They are armed because they distrust each other.

appears in many of Reagan's speeches

Communism in Crisis

Quite possibly, we are entering an era in history, a time of lasting change in the Soviet Union. We will have to see. But if so, it's because of the steadfastness of the allies, the democracies, for more than 40 years, and especially in this decade....Let us embrace honest change when it occurs, but let us also be wary. Let us stay strong.

Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, June 3, 1988

In an ironic sense Karl Marx was right. We are witnessing today a great revolutionary crisis—a crisis where the demands of the economic order are colliding directly with those of the political order. But the crisis is happening not in the free, non-Marxist West, but in the home of Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet Union.

It is the Soviet Union that runs against the tide of history by denying freedom and human dignity to its citizens....

What I am describing now is a plan and a hope for the long term—the march of freedom and democracy which will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history as it has left other tyrannies which stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people.

British Parliament, June 8, 1982

In the 1950s Khrushchev predicted: "We will bury you." But in the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history. In the Communist world, we see failure, technological backwardness, declining standards of health, even want of the most basic kind—too little food. Even today, the Soviet Union still cannot feed itself. After these four decades, then, there stands before the entire world one great and inescapable conclusion: Freedom leads to prosperity. Freedom replaces the ancient hatreds among the nations with comity and peace. Freedom is the victor.

Brandenburg Gate, West Berlin, June 12, 1987

Shots Heard Round the Communist World

General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

Brandenburg Gate, West Berlin, June 12, 1987

We Americans make no secret of our belief in freedom. In fact, it's something of a national pastime. Every four years the American people choose a new president, and 1988 is one of those years. At one point there were 13

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major candidates running in the two major parties, not to mention all the others, including the Socialist and Libertarian candidates—all trying to get my job.

About 1,000 local television stations, 8,500 radio stations, and about 1,700 daily newspapers, each one an independent, private enterprise, fiercely independent of the government, report on the candidates, grill them in interviews, and bring them together for debates. In the end, the people vote—they decide who will be the next president.

But freedom doesn't begin or end with elections. Go to any American town, to take just an example, and you'll see dozens of churches, representing many different beliefs—in many places synagogues and mosques—and you'll see families of every conceivable nationality worshipping together.

Go into any schoolroom, and there you will see children being taught the Declaration of Independence, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights—among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—that no government can justly deny—the guarantees in their Constitution for freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of religion.

Go into any courtroom and there will preside an independent judge, beholden to no government power. There, every defendant has the right to a trial by a jury of his peers, usually 12 men and women—common citizens, they are the ones, the only ones, who weigh the evidence and decide on guilt or innocence. In that court, the accused is innocent until proven guilty, and the word of a policeman, or any official, has no greater legal standing than the word of the accused.

Go to any university campus, and there you'll find an open, sometimes heated discussion of the problems in American society and what can be done to correct them. Turn on the television, and you'll see the legislature conducting the business of government right there before the camera, debating and voting on the legislation that will become the law of the land. March in any demonstration, and there are many of them—the people's right of assembly is guaranteed in the Constitution and protected by the police.

Go into any union hall, where the members know their right to strike is protected by law. As a matter of fact, one of the many jobs I had before this one was being president of a union, the Screen Actors Guild. I led my union out on strike—and I'm proud to say, we won.

But freedom is more even than this: Freedom is the right to question and change the established way of doing things. It is the continuing revolution of the marketplace. It is the understanding that allows us to recognize shortcomings and seek solutions. It is the right to put forth an idea, scoffed at by the experts, and watch it catch fire among the people. It is the right to follow your dream, or stick to your conscience even if you're the only one in a sea of doubters.

Moscow State University, May 31, 1988

Sometimes in America, some of our people may disagree with each other. We are often a highly disputatious nation. We rather like to argue. We are free to disagree among ourselves, and we do. But we always hold together as a society. We've held together for more than 200 years, because we're united by certain things in which we all believe, things to which we've quietly pledged our deepest loyalties....

We believe in the dignity of each man, woman, and child. Our entire system is founded on an appreciation of the special genius of each individual, and of his special right to make his own decisions and lead his own life.

We believe—and we believe it so deeply that Americans know these words by heart—we believe "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among those are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Fudan University, Shanghai, April 30, 1984

Nicaragua

I am against sending troops to Central America. They are simply not needed. Given a chance and the resources, the people of the area can fight their own fight. They have the men and women. They're capable of doing it. They have the people of their country behind them. All they need is our support. All they need is proof that we care as much about the fight for freedom 700 miles from our shores as the Soviets care about the fight against freedom 5,000 miles from theirs.

Conservative Political Action Conference, March 1, 1985

Forty years ago Republicans and Democrats joined together behind the Truman Doctrine. It must be our policy, Harry Truman declared, to support peoples struggling to preserve their freedom. Under that doctrine, Congress sent aid to Greece just in time to save that country from the closing grip of Communist tyranny. We saved freedom in Greece then—and with that same bipartisan spirit we can save freedom in Nicaragua today....

My fellow Americans, you know where I stand. The Soviets and the Sandinistas must not be permitted to crush freedom in Central America and threaten our own security on our own doorstep.

Now the Congress must decide where it stands. [As Clare Boothe Luce has said,] "the 99th Congress of the United States will be remembered as that body of men and women that either stopped the Communists before it was too late—or did not."

National Address, March 16, 1986

AMERICA'S MORAL CHALLENGE

The Wound in Our National Conscience

More than a decade ago, a Supreme Court decision literally wiped off the books of 50 states statutes protecting the rights of unborn children. Abortion on demand now takes the lives of up to one and a half million unborn children a year. Human life legislation ending this tragedy will some day pass the Congress, and you and I must never rest until it does. Unless and until it can be proven that the unborn child is not a living entity, then its right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be protected.

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You may remember that when abortion on demand began, many, and, indeed, I'm sure many of you, warned that the practice would lead to a decline in respect for human life, that the philosophical premises used to justify abortion on demand would ultimately be used to justify other attacks on the sacredness of human life—infanticide or mercy killing. Tragically enough, those warnings proved all too true. Only last year a court permitted the death by starvation of a handicapped infant.

National Association of Evangelicals, March 8, 1983

Today there is a wound in our national conscience; America will never be whole as long as the right to life granted by our Creator is denied to the unborn.

State of the Union Address, February 4, 1986

Welfare and Family

In the welfare culture, the breakdown of the family, the most basic support system, has reached crisis proportions—in female and child poverty, child abandonment, horrible crimes, and deteriorating schools. After hundreds of billions of dollars in poverty programs, the plight of the poor grows more painful. But the waste in dollars and cents pales before the most tragic loss—the sinful waste of human spirit and potential.

We can ignore this terrible truth no longer. As Franklin Roosevelt warned 51 years ago before this chamber: Welfare is "a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit." And now we must escape the spider's web of dependency....I am talking about real and lasting emancipation, because the success of welfare should be judged by how many of its recipients become independent of welfare.

State of the Union Address, February 4, 1986

In God We Trust

When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never intended to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself.

The evidence of this permeates our history and our government. The Declaration of Independence mentions the Supreme Being no less than four times. "In God We Trust" is engraved on our coinage. The Supreme Court opens its proceedings with a religious invocation. And the Members of Congress open their sessions with a prayer. I just happen to believe the schoolchildren of the United States are entitled to the same privileges as Supreme Court justices and congressmen.

National Association of Evangelicals, March 8, 1983

I've always cherished the belief that all of history is such a pilgrimage and that our Maker, while never denying us free will, does over time guide us with a wise and provident hand, giving direction to history and slowly bringing good from evil, leading us ever so slowly, but ever so relentlessly and lovingly, to a moment when the will of man and God are as one again....

Here, then, is our formula for completing our crusade for freedom. Here, the strength of our civilization and our belief in the rights of humanity. Our faith is in a higher law. Yes, we believe in prayer and its power. And like the founding fathers of both our lands, we hold that humanity was meant not to be dishonored by the all-powerful state, but to live in the image and likeness of Him who made us.

More than five decades ago when an American president told his generation that they had a rendezvous with destiny, at almost the same moment, a prime minister asked the British people for their finest hour. This rendezvous, this finest hour, is still upon us. Let us seek to do His will in all things, to stand for freedom, to speak for humanity. Come my friends, as it was said of old by Tennyson, it is not too late to seek a newer world.

Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, June 3, 1988

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One Hundred Conservative Victories

The Reagan Years

Adam Meyerson

1980

November 4. **Reagan Landslide.** Political establishment shocked as Reagan carries all but five states and the District of Columbia, and Republicans take charge of Senate, gaining 12 seats. Defeat of George McGovern, Frank Church, Birch Bayh, Warren Magnuson, John Culver, and Gaylord Nelson represents victory for New Right groups such as NCPAC, who informed voters where these liberal senators really stood.

November 4. **Landslide II: Tax Revolt and Privatization.** Massachusetts voters limit property taxes to 2.5 percent of assessed valuation, playing major role in Bay State boom over next five years. Voters in Los Angeles County, California, elect new Board of Supervisors that becomes pacesetter in privatization of municipal services.

November 7. **Mandate from Heritage.** Heritage Foundation's *Mandate for Leadership* presents incoming administration with over 2,000 specific proposals, as United Press International put it, for "grabbing the government by its frayed New Deal lapels and shaking out 48 years of liberal policies."

December 29. **"Cuckolded by the Compassionate State."** Publication of George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty* explains supply-side economics and the conservative case against the welfare state to hundreds of thousands. Book is national best-seller and eventually sells 500,000 copies worldwide.

1981

January 13. **Radio Deregulation.** FCC frees radio stations from several major regulations including specific maximum limits on commercials and minimum percentage requirements for news and public affairs programming.

January 20. **Reagan Inauguration.** Ronald Reagan takes presidential oath of office, announcing his intention to make government "work with us, not over us; stand by our side, not ride on our back."

January 28. **Decontrol of Oil.** Reagan lifts controls on production and allocation of oil. Petroleum prices then were $37 a barrel. In September 1988 they were $17.

February 5. **600-Ship Navy.** John Lehman takes helm of Navy, instituting program for 600-ship fleet giving American forces capabilities in Indian Ocean they lacked during Iranian hostage crisis, and providing for forward defense "maritime strategy" to deter Soviet aggression by threat of attacks on Soviet naval assets.

February 17. **Reform of Regulatory Process.** President Reagan's Executive Order No. 12291 requires regulatory agencies to prove that the benefits of each new rule exceed costs, that they had sufficient information on which to base their proposal, and that they had chosen the least costly way of regulating.

March 30. **Reagan Survives Assassin.** Reagan forgets to duck but survives assassin's bullet; his grace under pain makes him a national hero.

July 1. **Greenlining Inner Cities.** Governor William A. O'Neill signs legislation making Connecticut the first of 25 states to designate enterprise zones promoting inner-city business through lower taxes and reduced regulation.

July 29. **Reagan Tax Victory.** With 48 Democrats defecting, House approves Reagan's 3-year, 25 percent personal income tax cut. Package includes accelerated depreciation allowances and investment tax credits, indexation of personal income taxes beginning in 1984, and individual retirement accounts for all taxpayers, thus laying groundwork for a private sector alternative to Social Security. An extraordinary economic boom follows implementation of final tax cut on January 1, 1983. Tax cut

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also transforms political dynamics of Washington by demolishing prospects of major new spending initiatives.

July 31. **Reagan Budget Victory.** Congress approves reconciliation measure chopping $35 billion out of projected spending for fiscal year 1982. In only victory for federalism during Reagan administration, 57 categorical grant programs in health, education, and social services are consolidated into seven block grants.

August 3. **Air Controllers Fired.** Reagan fires 11,000 striking air controllers who refuse to meet his deadline to return to work. "Dammit," he says, "the law is the law, and the law says they cannot strike. If they strike, they quit their jobs." Fifty-seven percent of Americans approve of Reagan's stand.

November 15. **ABC Hires Will.** Staunch anti-Communism and sympathy for agenda of social-issues conservatives begin to be heard on major television networks as ABC News brings George Will onto "This Week with David Brinkley."

December 8. **Religion Allowed Back on Campus.** Supreme Court, in *Windmar* v. *Vincent,* rules that religious student groups have the "free exercise" right to meet on publicly-owned university campuses. Equal Access Act, signed into law on August 11, 1984, provides same right to religious (and nonreligious) student groups meeting on public high school grounds after hours.

1982

February 6. **Sontag Says Conservatives Right about Communism.** Literary critic Susan Sontag berates New York intellectual world for failure to understand that Communism is "the most successful variant of Fascism." Argues that subscribers to *Reader's Digest* learn more about realities of Communism than readers of *The Nation.* "Could it be that our enemies were right?"

February 19. **Parental Control.** Parents regain some control over moral education of their children as Reagan administration requires family planning clinics that receive federal funds to notify parents of children under 18 when they receive prescription contraceptive pills and devices.

April 23-25. **Federalist Society.** National symposium of conservative law students at Yale leads to founding of Federalist Society, a nationwide network of young conservative lawyers and law students.

May 17. **Washington Times.** First issue of *Washington Times* rolls off press, giving Washingtonians a conservative alternative to the *Post* that often scoops its competition on major stories.

June 8. **Westminster Address.** Reagan, in address before British Parliament, calls for a National Endowment for Democracy and a world crusade for freedom. "The march of freedom and democracy," he prophesies, "will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history as it has left other tyrannies which stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people."

June 30. **Defeat of ERA.** Equal Rights Amendment defeated when extended deadline passes with only 35 of needed 38 states ratifying. Victory for coalitions led by Phyllis Schlafly, who argued that political issues involving distinction between men and women—such as combat duty for women, the legal status of single-sex schools, or the laws governing divorce settlements—should be resolved by legislatures instead of courts. ERA supporters later lose battle to resurrect amendment when Vermont voters overwhelmingly reject state ERA on November 4, 1986.

August. **Reagan Boom.** Beginning of most sustained economic expansion in modern U.S. history, totally unpredicted by Keynesian economists, leads to generation of 18 million new jobs before Reagan leaves office.

October 20. **Stigler Wins Nobel.** George Stigler of University of Chicago wins Nobel Economics Prize for his seminal work on political economy of regulation, particularly the capture of regulatory agencies by industries they are supposed to regulate.

1983

Taming of Inflation. Stagflation of 1970s disappears, as increase in consumer price index falls to 3.2 percent, down from 13.5 percent in 1980.

March 8. **Evil Empire.** Reagan calls Soviet Union an evil empire in speech before convention of National Association of Evangelicals. Also refers to American racism as "legacy of evil."

March 23. **Strategic Defense Initiative.** Reagan offers practical hope to the world that the miracles of modern electronics can lessen dangers of nuclear war. Bypassing Pentagon and State Department bureaucracies, his Strategic Defense Initiative forces major rethinking of the nature of deterrence and the best means of achieving arms control. SDI gives focus to previously uncoordinated research that may be able to protect America and its allies against Soviet nuclear arsenal without having to rely on mutual assured destruction and Soviet promises to comply with treaties.

April 23. **"A Nation at Risk."** Report to President Reagan by the National Commission on Excellence in Education calls national attention to the disastrous performance of American schools.

October 25. **Liberation of Grenada.** United States liberates Grenada at request of eight neighboring Caribbean nations, preventing consolidation of Leninist government that would have become major Soviet base for destabilizing region. Three days later, rescued American medical

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students kiss U.S. soil. On December 3, 1984, Grenada holds free elections in which 90 percent of voters support candidates who approved of U.S. intervention.

December. **NATO Survives Peacenik Offensive.** Reagan's insistence on sticking by NATO commitments bears fruit as alliance survives arrival of first U.S. cruise missiles at England's Greenham Common air base, and first battery of Pershing IIs in West Germany. European leaders who stood with Reagan are supported by voters—Helmut Kohl elected on March 6, 1983, and Margaret Thatcher overwhelmingly reelected on June 9, 1983.

1984

January 16. **Grace Commission Report.** Grace Commission releases 23,000-page report on government waste and inefficiency. Makes 2,478 recommendations that could save $424 billion over three years.

January 23. **Soviet Treaty Violations Reported.** First official report of Soviet violations of arms control treaties is presented to Congress by President Reagan.

February 21. **Tribute to Chambers.** Medal of Freedom awarded posthumously to Whittaker Chambers, witness to the threat of Communism in America.

June 12. **Demise of Industrial Policy.** Rhode Island voters reject by four to one a referendum to establish a state "industrial policy"—proving there is no political support for Gary Hart's major "new idea."

June 26. **Aid to El Salvador.** Seven weeks after free elections in El Salvador that congressional liberals insisted would never take place, Congress finally approves urgent supplemental aid to Salvadoran military, preventing country from falling to Communist guerrillas.

July 5. **Exception to Exclusionary Rule.** Supreme Court, in *U.S.* v. *Leon,* allows "good faith" exception to exclusionary rule letting even the most dangerous criminals go free when evidence against them has been obtained illegally. Such evidence can now be used in court if police had search warrant and thought they were acting legally.

July 11. **Conservative Environmental Policy.** A report by the President's Council on Environmental Quality demonstrates ecological benefits that would result from privatization of many federal lands.

August 20. **"Blame America First."** Jeane Kirkpatrick's "Blame America-First" speech at GOP Convention accuses "San Francisco Democrats" of betraying foreign policy ideals of Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy and instead blaming America for crimes of Communists and terrorists.

September 27. **Losing Ground**. Publication of Charles Murray's *Losing Ground* dramatizes argument that hundreds of billions in Great Society spending have failed to improve the lot of America's poor.

October 12. **Reagan Anti-Crime Bill.** Reagan signs sweeping anti-crime legislation toughening federal provisions for bail, parole, and sentencing, and establishing forfeiture of assets used in commission of crime.

November 6. **Reagan's Landslide Reelection.** Ronald Reagan carries 49 states in landslide reelection, as Walter Mondale suffers most overwhelming defeat since Alf Landon and George McGovern. Unfortunately, Reagan's mandate for his second term is limited by themelessness of his campaign.

December 22. **Support for SDI.** Britain, later followed by West Germany, Japan, Israel, and Italy, announces it will cooperate with U.S. in strategic defense research.

December 31. **Sunset for CAB.** Civil Aeronautics Board goes out of business in accordance with airline deregulation legislation of 1978.

1985

Alms Buildup. Americans in this supposed "Age of Greed" give $75 billion in charitable contributions, a 50 percent increase over 1980. By 1988, giving increases to $100 billion.

January 7. **Soviet INF concessions.** Reagan's refusal to panic when Soviets walk out of INF negotiations on November 23, 1983, leads to Soviet return to table to discuss the same U.S. proposal that triggered walkout.

February 6. **Bennett's Bully Pulpit.** Confirmation of Bill Bennett as Secretary of Education dramatically changes federal role in education. Reversing predecessors' goal of establishing centralized education bureaucracy in Washington, Bennett uses bully pulpit to press for improvement in moral and intellectual quality of school and university education.

March 17. **New Leftists Recant.** *Washington Post* publishes article by former *Ramparts* editors and New Left leaders Peter Collier and David Horowitz confessing that anti-war movement was wrong to oppose the struggle against Communism in Vietnam.

Spring. **Challenge to Civil Rights Orthodoxy**. In "The Moral Quandary of the Black Community," published in the *Public Interest,* Harvard economist Glenn Loury challenges black leadership to move beyond crusade against lingering racism and address real problems facing large sections of black community: family breakdown, high crime rates, disdain for education.

May 20. **Radio Free Cuba.** U.S. begins 14.5 hours of daily broadcasting on Radio Marti to "promote the cause of freedom in Cuba."

June 29. **B-1 Bomber.** First B-1 bomber comes off production line, four years after Reagan reverses Carter's decision to cancel system. Production means U.S. deterrent forces will have bomber capable of penetrating

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Soviet air defenses from mid-1980s until mid-1990s when Stealth bomber becomes operational.

July 9. **Meese's "Original Intent" Speech.** Attorney General Edwin Meese brings meaning of the Constitution to center stage of national debate. His call for a "Jurisprudence of Original Intent," in speech before American Bar Association, later draws admissions from Supreme Court Justices Brennan and Marshall that they disregard intent of Framers in their own constitutional interpretations.

July 10. **Repeal of Clark Amendment.** Clark Amendment barring U.S. aid to Jonas Savimbi's freedom fighters in Angola is repealed over protest of State Department. Stage set for Savimbi's meeting with Reagan on January 30, 1986, and for administration decision on February 18, 1986, to supply UNITA with $15 million in aid, including Stingers.

August 1. **Defunding Forced Abortions.** Congress denies foreign aid funds to any group that supports or participates in management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization.

December 11. **Gramm-Rudman.** Ted Kennedy and 60 other senators vote for Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill committing Congress to a balanced budget by fiscal year 1991, with ever-declining deficits each year along the way.

December 30. **Pullout from UNESCO.** U.S., followed by Britain and Singapore, withdraws from UNESCO, setting the United Nations on notice that American taxpayers will no longer foot bills for gross mismanagement or programs that undermine basic freedoms.

1986

January 25. **CBS Sees Light on Poverty.** Conservative wisdom on poverty becomes conventional wisdom as Bill Moyers' report on CBS, "The Vanishing Family: Crisis in Black America," blames breakdown of families for persistence of poverty in inner cities.

February 25. **Stingers to Mujahideen.** Over initial opposition of CIA, Pentagon, and State Department, Reagan administration agrees to supply Afghan freedom fighters with Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

February 25. **Reagan and Aquino.** Reagan's encouragement of a peaceful transfer of power from Ferdinand Marcos to a democratically elected, non-Communist government in Philippines contrasts dramatically with Carter's failure to insist on legitimate succession procedure in Shah's Iran and Somoza's Nicaragua.

March 7. **Soviet Spies Ejected.** Over opposition of State Department, United States orders Soviet Union to reduce number of "diplomats" at its United Nations mission from 275 to 170, and later identifies 25 Soviet spies who must be included in group to leave.

April 14. **Attack on Libya.** Terrorism banished from Mediterranean and Europe for four months, as U.S. attacks five Libyan targets near Tripoli and Benghazi in retaliation for Qadhafi's involvement in series of terrorist attacks. Almost 70 percent of Americans approve of action.

May 27. **Reagan Renounces SALT.** In view of seven major violations by the Soviet Union, Reagan announces U.S. will no longer abide by nuclear weapons limits of SALT I and the never-ratified SALT II. Instead decisions about U.S. deterrent forces will be based on assessment of Soviet nuclear threat.

June 3. **Popular Support for Tort Reform.** Californians vote in Proposition 51 to abolish joint and several liability for noneconomic damages, ensuring that defendants with "deep pockets" are liable for damages only in proportion to their actual responsibility for the harm. Referendum shows popular dissatisfaction with outrageous awards for civil suits and gives boost to tort reform movement sweeping state legislatures.

June 12. **Reagan Judiciary.** Confirmation of Stephen Williams as judge on U.S. Appeals Court for D.C. Circuit, added to earlier confirmations of Robert Bork, Kenneth Starr, Laurence Silberman, James Buckley, and Antonin Scalia (later replaced by Douglas Ginsburg), gives conservatives a majority on nation's second most important court, formerly the bastion of liberal judicial activism.

June 25. **Aid to Contras.** House repeals Boland Amendment as it belatedly votes 221 to 209 to provide $100 million in aid to Nicaragua's Contras, the only policy, short of direct U.S. intervention, that can keep Central American Communists on defensive and thus buy time for fragile democracies of El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, as well as troubled economy of Mexico: the only policy, therefore, that can keep American boys out of a Central American war.

June 30. **No Right to Sodomy.** Supreme Court in *Bowers* v. *Hardwick* finds no constitutional right to sodomy in due process clause for 14th Amendment or in penumbras and emanations of any other amendment. The same logic, if extended to abortion, would invalidate reasoning of *Roe* v. *Wade.*

August 6. **Veto of Jenkins Bill.** World trade war averted, at least temporarily, as Congress fails to override Reagan's veto of Jenkins Bill, which would have further limited textile imports.

August 25. **Feminists Rediscover Family.** Betty Friedan, in *The Second Stage,* calls on feminist movement to move away from hostility to motherhood and family.

September 17. **Rehnquist/Scalia Confirmation.** Senate confirms William Rehnquist as Chief Justice and Antonin Scalia as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, bringing a concentration of intellectual rigor back to nation's highest court for first time in a generation, and leaving a

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conservative legacy that will long outlive the Reagan administration.

September 20. **Democrats Change Foreign Policy?** Democratic Policy Commission, an official arm of Democratic Party, issues foreign policy statement calling Soviet Union "the greatest threat to world peace and freedom" and supporting military aid for "democratic elements" struggling against Soviets.

October 17. **Nobel for Buchanan.** James Buchanan, the seminal developer of Public Choice theory along with Gordon Tullock, wins Nobel Prize for Economics.

October 22. **Reagan's Second Tax Victory.** Reagan achieves his number one domestic priority for second term as he signs tax reform bill lowering top marginal income tax rates to 28 percent by 1988. Victory represents remarkable coalition between conservatives who wanted lower rates and liberals who wanted fewer "loopholes." Result is that work and investment decisions will henceforth be based more on real economic calculations than on tax advantages.

November 4. **Rose Bird Ousted.** Californians vote two to one to remove Chief Justice Rose Bird and two other state Supreme Court justices because of their cavalier disregard for the Constitution in death penalty cases and their overt partisanship in reapportionment cases.

1987

January 8. **Dow Breaks 2,000.** Wall Street gives its verdict on Reaganomics as Dow Jones stock market index breaks 2,000 one week after '86 tax cuts go into effect. Despite crash of October 1987, by early 1989 Dow Jones Index is three times its level of 1980, though still lower in inflation-adjusted terms than in 1973.

March 26. **Sale of Conrail**. Seventeen years after the bankruptcy of Penn Central, and seven years after railroad deregulation permits return of profitability in railroad industry, U.S. government sells its 85 percent share in Conrail for $1.65 billion, one of the largest public stock offerings in Wall Street history.

April 2. **Bloom Opens Minds.** Publication of Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*, which echoes Bill Bennett's critique of the moral and intellectual emptiness of American education. Becomes best-selling book of mid-1987.

May 8. **New Welfare Consensus.** American Enterprise Institute working seminar of liberals and conservatives issues consensus statement on welfare policy: The way to move out of poverty is to finish high school, get married and stay married, and take (and keep) a job.

June 9. **Takings Clause Applied to Land-Use Regulation.** Supreme Court, in *First English Evangelical Lutheran Church of Glendale* v. *County of Los Angeles,* rules that property owners are entitled to compensation for government regulations that deprive them of reasonable use of their land.

June 12. **"Tear Down the Wall."** Reagan calls on General Secretary Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall if he's really serious about glasnost.

July 7. **North Stops Congressional Coup d'Etat.** Ollie North becomes national hero with his testimony in Iran/Contra hearings, preventing congressional Democrats from using hearings to permanently discredit Reagan presidency as Watergate discredited Nixon.

August 4. **Repeal of Fairness Doctrine.** Recognizing that competition in programming is best guarantee of diversity, FCC repeals "Fairness Doctrine" requiring TV and radio broadcasters to give equal time to opposing points of view, a rule that unintentionally stifled the expression of controversial viewpoints.

December 21. **Tenant Management.** Both houses of Congress pass legislation enabling public housing projects to sell their units to tenants, turning federal dependents into property owners. First such sale takes place at Kenilworth-Parkside project in Washington, D.C., October 25, 1988.

1988

February 3. **Kennedy Confirmation.** After its disgraceful treatment of Robert Bork, Senate unanimously confirms Anthony Kennedy as Supreme Court Justice, bringing to the bench a jurist who apparently shares Bork's views of constitutional interpretation.

March 10. **Cuba Investigated.** Tough Reagan diplomacy and persistent U.S. attacks on the United Nations' double standard pay off, as U.N. Human Rights Commission agrees to investigate charges of human-rights violations by Cuba.

March 18. **Privatization Report.** Report of President Reagan's Commission on Privatization recommends transfer to private sector of Postal Service, Federal National Mortgage Association, Amtrak, and Naval Petroleum Reserves, as well as contracting out of many government services and much greater use of vouchers in education, health care, and low-income housing.

May 31. **Reagan at Moscow State.** Under statue of Lenin, President Reagan gives the most ringing defense of liberty ever publicly spoken in Soviet Union.

July 12. **Dukakis Picks Bentsen.** Recognizing that embracing the Left is the road to electoral ruin, Democratic presidential nominee picks centrist Texan as running mate and keeps distance from his own ideology at his party convention.

July 13. **UDAGs Eliminated.** Senate follows House in approving budget bill without Urban Development Ac-

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tion Grants, a costly federal subsidy for hoteliers and urban shopping mall developers.

August 18. **Bush Nomination.** George Bush runs on conservative GOP platform as he accepts party's nomination for president. Also signals with his choice of Dan Quayle as running mate his goal of forging coalition between conservative movement and Republican establishment.

October 5. **Plebiscite in Chile.** Chile holds peaceful plebiscite on presidency of General Pinochet, another important milestone in remarkable democratization of Latin America. Nine Latin countries become democracies during Reagan years, and Mexico enjoys its most open electoral contest in generations.

October 12. **Military Base Closings.** Both Houses of Congress pass bill proposed by Representative Dick Armey to bypass pork-barrel politics by setting up independent panel to recommend closing of obsolete military bases.

November 8. **Bush Victory.** Bush wins 40 states and 54 percent of the vote in impressive presidential victory that consolidates Reagan revolution in executive branch.

November 8. **Abortion Referenda.** Voters in Michigan and Arkansas pass laws banning public funding of abortion, while those in Colorado sustain similar existing law.

November 17. **Sununu White House.** President-elect Bush picks conservative, John Sununu, as chief of staff.

December 7. **Possible Soviet Troop Reductions.** Reagan's defense buildup begins to make Soviets potentially less aggressive, as General Secretary Gorbachev announces plans to demobilize 500,000 Soviet troops and 10,000 tanks by January 1991.

December 19. **Kemp at HUD.** Department of Housing and Urban Development becomes laboratory for innovative conservative ideas on homelessness and urban decay with nomination of Jack Kemp as Secretary.

December 31. **U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement.** Canada's Parliament passes Free Trade Agreement signed by Reagan on September 28, 1988, after overwhelming passage in both houses of Congress. FTA will provide major economic benefits for both U.S. and Canada, and is model for similar agreements with other trading partners.

1989

January 4. **Mandate III.** Heritage Foundation's *Mandate for Leadership III* offers 927 pages of policy recommendations for incoming Bush administration, as well as analyses of how to overcome institutional constraints on reform.

January 9. **Reagan's Final Budget.** Reagan's budget for fiscal year 1990 meets Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit targets without either tax increase or cut in defense spending, and becomes model for similar budget proposal by President Bush on February 9.

January 12. **Bennett's New Bully Pulpit.** Bush nominates William J. Bennett as drug czar.

February 15. **Pullout from Afghanistan.** Soviets apparently complete military withdrawal from Afghanistan, the first Soviet military retreat since departure from Austria in 1955. A major victory for Reagan Doctrine of providing aid for anti-Communist resistance forces.

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Morning In America

Reagan Rebuilt the Presidency

Edwin J. Feulner Jr.

Ronald Reagan changed the political landscape in ways that, just a few years ago, seemed unthinkable. Today even liberals use words that eight years ago would have branded them as reactionary turncoats.

Even his most ardent opponents acknowledge that Mr. Reagan dramatically changed the tone of the nation. Jimmy Carter, in a 1979 speech, said America suffered from a "malaise." America was also suffering from sky-high interest rates, inflation, and unemployment, and its prestige abroad had hit rock bottom—not things that inspire revelry.

What Mr. Carter didn't say was that part of a president's job is to help shape national attitudes. If America was on a "downer," he shared the blame. On came President Reagan, saying, "It's morning in America," "jobs and growth instead of tax and spend," and pledging to free the entrepreneurial spirit from excessive taxation and regulation.

The establishment intelligentsia dismissed such rhetoric as corny and simplistic, as indeed it would have been had there been no substance behind it. As it was, the president's rhetorical skills helped restore the image of forceful, dynamic leadership to the office of the presidency, and this was crucial in galvanizing support for his policies.

The result? Simply compare today's "misery index"—the sum of the unemployment and inflation rates—with what it was when Mr. Reagan took office. For that matter, compare it to that of West Germany, often held up as a model for the United States to emulate. As so many Europeans have come to realize, the economic statistics show that whatever Mr. Reagan did worked far better than their governments' policies.

One can still hear talk of "the necessity" of raising taxes, but the Reagan years have made it impossible to repress the snickers. The least we should have learned in the last eight years is that cutting taxes and minimizing regulation spur economic growth and generate revenue.

Whopping deficits develop if spending rises faster than revenues. But the federal deficit has grown not because taxes were cut but because spending, even spending on social programs, wasn't cut enough. The president's chief failure in domestic policy was his unwillingness to use his veto power to force Congress to revise its so-called budget process.

By transferring responsibilities from Washington to the states and cities, Mr. Reagan showed that they can be laboratories where a wide variety of public-policy experiments can be carried out with flexibility and sensitivity to local conditions. The federal bureaucracy, by contrast, is remote, elephantine, arthritic.

America Standing Tall

Some of the least-noted of Mr. Reagan's accomplishments were in foreign policy. Arms control, Nicaragua, and, in recent years, the Iran/Contra affair have received the most attention. Mr. Reagan's inability to persuade Congress to prevent the Sandinistas from solidifying a second Communist regime in this hemisphere—not the Iran/Contra affair—was the president's worst foreign policy failure.

But in the meantime, passing almost unnoticed, has been a worldwide spread of democratic capitalism that in no small measure owes itself to Mr. Reagan's commitment. The democratic tide has swept Central and South America and Asia. The Philippines, Taiwan, and South Korea all have liberalized their societies to degrees that would have seemed incredible in the 1970s, and may not have been possible without the administration's fine-tuned support.

Only Grenada has been liberated during the Reagan era. But no nation has fallen to Communism, and the Soviets have pulled out of Afghanistan.

The jury is still out on the president's arms control initiatives. Serious questions remain about verification and compliance. In the long run, what will be more important than any arms control treaty or the strengthening of United States armed forces is the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Technology offers the possibility of a system designed to defend ourselves from enemy attack instead of constantly building more weapons to insure that we can

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retaliate if attacked. SDI research is not a certain path to world peace any more than cancer research is a certain path to health, but the goals are no less worth the price. Mr. Reagan's initiative could be historic.

It is easy to forget that one can't reverse the direction of the Washington elephant overnight or even in eight years. Considering that Mr. Reagan swam against the tide of congressional opposition, his accomplishments are all the more remarkable.

His agenda, to be sure, is far from finished. Federal spending still rages out of control. Business and capital gains taxes are still too high. Initiatives to reform Medicare and Social Security have been inadequate. The Reagan Doctrine has yet to liberate even one nation from Communism. SDI suffers from inadequate funding. These must be top priorities for George Bush.

Presidents leave lasting legacies by establishing new frameworks for public policy debates. Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies culminated with Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society programs 21 years after FDR's death. The new framework that Mr. Reagan created has spawned a generation of new institutions staffed by young people who have abandoned the delusions of their counterparts in the 1960s. Just as the Roosevelt era gave way only eight years ago, the full flower of Ronald Reagan's era will come in the next century.

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The Ten Legacies of Ronald Reagan

Prosperity at Home, Peace Abroad

Burton Yale Pines

When Ronald Reagan stepped down as president on January 20, 1989, he had served eight years. This itself is an extraordinary accomplishment; very few American presidents have served two full terms. In this century, in fact, only three others have done so: Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower—and both Wilson and Eisenhower were in ill health their final years in office.

Yet Ronald Reagan's greatest accomplishment is not simply staying in power for eight years. His greatest achievement is the legacy he leaves his successor. George Bush leads an America that has been changed profoundly by the Reagan Revolution. This revolution has transformed America as significantly as have two previous presidential revolutions: the political revolution of Andrew Jackson in the 1830s and that of Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s.

Just as the American government in the 19th century was shaped by the Jackson legacy, and just as American government in this century has been shaped by the Roosevelt legacy, so the next American presidents, for several decades, will be shaped and influenced and limited by the Reagan legacy.

A Historic Turning Point

Ronald Reagan's presidency was the most important in a half-century, perhaps in a century. What I would like to discuss with you today are the 10 most important legacies Ronald Reagan leaves America and America's next president.

George Bush is very lucky to be following Ronald Reagan—much luckier than Reagan was. George Bush finds himself leading a nation that is much healthier, stronger, more confident, more optimistic, and even much happier than the nation that Reagan found himself leading in 1981.

Before we start looking at the Reagan legacies, we should recall what America was like in 1981 when Ronald Reagan became president. It was a dreadful, terrible time in America and for America. In the 1970s, the U.S. had been on the retreat on almost every front. We retreated in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and in the face of the OPEC oil cartel. We surrendered the Panama Canal. We closed our eyes to Soviet violations of important treaties. By our actions, we allowed the Soviets to invade Afghanistan. And then there was Iran. There we allowed the overthrow of the Shah's government, which was our good friend and vital to our security. And we allowed ourselves to be held hostage for 444 days.

At home, too, things were terrible in the 1970s. The U.S. surrendered to high taxes, inflation, gasoline shortages, to massive government interference in the economy and in the lives of individual Americans. We surrendered to crime on the streets and to low standards in our schools.

Perhaps worst of all, we seemed to abandon the most important dream in American history: the dream that we can make tomorrow better than today and that America's children are entitled to believe that they will lead better lives than their parents. Instead of traditional American optimism and dreams of hope, we were told—and we began to believe—that less is more, that small is beautiful, that resources are disappearing and never will be replaced, and that yesterday was better than tomorrow ever will be.

The 1970s were a dreadful decade for my country. The 1980s have been much better, thanks in large measure to Ronald Reagan's leadership and the 10 most constructive and important legacies he leaves behind.

Formula for Economic Growth

Growth, as we know, is very important. It is economic growth that makes it possible for living standards to increase for nearly every American. It is growth that defeats poverty. It is growth that fuels technological, scientific, and medical progress. It is growth that enables us to have more options in life, to have more leisure, to

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learn and do more things—to become the well-rounded, creative human being about whom Karl Marx wrote in 1844 in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts.*

Reagan reminded America that government cannot create economic growth and that government generally is the enemy of economic growth. Yet Reagan also taught us that there is something that government can do. It can create an environment that is friendly to growth. Government can help unleash human imagination and creativity. It can encourage men and women to take economic risks and then allow them to get big rewards when they succeed. Of course, it also must allow them to fail and pay the price of failure.

Reagan taught us that the hero of economic growth is the entrepreneur. This is a French word that technically means someone who undertakes to do something. But when translated into the American language, entrepreneur means much more. It is the entrepreneur who gets the new ideas, takes the risks, tries the new things. It is the entrepreneur who works long and hard, who finds the money for risky ventures, who breaks the rules, who is the pioneer and the inventor. Truly, entrepreneurs are the heroes of a growing economy.

Government, of course, cannot be an entrepreneur. Bureaucracies do not take risks; they are not pioneers; they do not get new ideas; and they cannot move quickly. But government can encourage individuals to be entrepreneurs.

Ronald Reagan did this by lowering taxes, by reducing government regulation and interference in the economy, and by making it easier for individuals to accumulate the money they can use for new economic enterprises.

This is what Reagan did. And what are the results? We have had the longest period of economic growth in peacetime in American history—probably world history. A record number of new American businesses have been created; a record number of new jobs have been created (and, in fact, experts now worry about a labor shortage in America); we are producing more new products and new ideas and are doing so more efficiently than at any time in our history.

There is a new dynamism in America. And Ronald Reagan once again proved that capitalism works—that free market economics succeeds. This is a wonderful legacy for America—and the world.

New Federalism

As you may know, federalism has been the political principle upon which my nation has been organized and governed. My country is called, after all, the United States. This name reflects the fact that the various states united together to create a nation. When the states did this they gave some important powers to the new national government. But they also kept many powers for themselves. This arrangement, this division of powers, is known as the federal system.

This is not just some abstract political theory for professors and philosophers. The federal system has determined who has had power in the U.S. and has given a great deal of power to the states. This is a good idea because the states are much closer to the people than is the national government. Thus, the states are more responsive to the people. Giving great powers to the states also is a good idea because it recognizes the enormous diversity of the U.S. What is good for one section of the nation, after all, may not be good for all sections.

For America's first 150 years as a nation, the federal system was balanced and worked well. But things began changing in the 1930s and 1940s. The huge national economic programs during the Depression and the huge effort to fight World War II gave the national government great new powers. This weakened the federal system. What we saw in Washington was the growth of hundreds of new government agencies with huge new bureaucracies. These were unfriendly to the people, unsympathetic, unresponsive, and, of course, uncreative. At the same time, because so much power had shifted to Washington, Americans, and even state and local officials, began losing their confidence in their own ability to solve problems. They began looking to Washington for solutions for almost everything. This was something new in America—and something dangerous.

Reagan has invoked words, thoughts, and images that have touched American hearts and have recalled a special pride we long had in our country.

Ronald Reagan has reversed this. His policies have restored power to the states and cities, and reduced the power of the central government in Washington. Though state officials at first hesitated and were reluctant to accept this new power, now they are enthusiastic about it. Once again the states are the laboratories of new ideas. And great new ideas are coming from the states—in housing issues, education reform, help for the poor, and ways to clean the environment.

Restoring the balance to America's federal system is a great Reagan legacy.

Privatization

Privatization is a clumsy, terrible word for a rather simple and sound idea. Privatization is a process by which private companies and groups provide services that had been provided by the government. There are many advantages to this. First, it reduces the size of the government and its role in society; in itself, this is a very good thing. Second, it reduces government expenses because private firms almost always can provide services at lower cost than can government agencies. And third, it is more efficient and more responsive to the needs of the people.

Various states and cities have been pioneers in privatization. Former government services now provided by private firms include fire protection, garbage collec-

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tion, bus service, prison management, and even neighborhood court systems to resolve minor disputes.

Ronald Reagan began the privatization of federal services and programs. For example, he sold Conrail, one of America's largest railroads, to a private firm. Reagan also began the process of allowing private companies to build rockets to launch payloads into space.

While much remains to be done with privatization, Reagan demonstrated that the president can use the private sector to deal with problems that in the past would have been addressed by government.

The Reagan Doctrine is a true revolutionary policy. It proclaims that the future belongs to democracy, not to Soviet-imposed dictatorships.

Checking Judicial Activism

I realize that the appointment of American judges is an issue to which foreigners pay little attention. Yet it is very important because court decisions have a great impact on government policies.

For most of American history, the courts respected the Constitution's division of powers. According to this division, the Congress makes the laws, the president enforces the laws, and the courts rule when there is a dispute about the laws. In recent decades, however, the federal courts, particularly the highest court, called the Supreme Court, have become more aggressive. They have taken some of the power from the Congress and president and even have begun to make laws. This violated a long tradition in the U.S. and threatened to upset the delicate balance between the different parts of the central government.

Ronald Reagan promised to stop this. He did so by appointing judges to the court who respect the traditional role of the court. He appointed judges who are against the activist role of the court. Reagan appointed three of the Supreme Court's nine judges and he appointed 361 of the federal court system's 743 judges. You may know that these judges keep their jobs for the rest of their lives and cannot be removed by new presidents. Thus, they will influence court decisions for decades. Indeed, Reagan deliberately appointed young people as judges.

Rebuilding America's Military Might

Throughout the 1970s, under Republican and Democratic presidents, the U.S. became militarily weaker.

What did this mean? It meant that the U.S. would find it increasingly difficult to fulfill its security commitments to other nations. It meant that it was becoming increasingly questionable whether the U.S. would be able to keep its promises to Western Europe or Japan or Israel or Southeast Asia. It meant that the U.S. was not able to deal with Moscow from a position of strength. Ronald Reagan changed this.

Today we can keep our promises. Today we again can be trusted as allies. And today we certainly can deal with Moscow from a position of strength. Because of what Ronald Reagan did, the U.S. has a greater military capability than at any time in a quarter-century.

The rebuilding of the American arsenal has changed what the Soviets at one time liked to call the "global correlation of forces." This correlation now has tilted toward the U.S. This should please and reassure America's friends around the world—and certainly here in China. We now are a more reliable friend and again a true superpower that can block Soviet aggression and expansion. This, of course, gives the new U.S. president valuable flexibility in dealing with Moscow.

Grappling with the Bear

For too long America gave Moscow the advantage in negotiations. Those who were making U.S. policy seemed to feel that any treaty with the Soviets is better than no treaty. As such, Americans were always willing to make concessions to Moscow; we were afraid of sticking to our position if this would mean that the negotiations would break down. The result of this was the series of Soviet gains at the bargaining table: SALT I, the ABM Treaty, cultural exchanges, SALT II.

Ronald Reagan changed this. His lesson to future presidents is simple, but it requires determination and self-confidence. There are two parts to this lesson. First, you can only deal with Moscow from a position of strength; this is why it is so important that the U.S. arsenal has been rebuilt. Reagan, after all, delayed serious negotiations with the Soviets until near the end of his first term — until the U.S. again was militarily strong. You here in China know very well that you cannot deal with Moscow if you are weak; the Soviets will not be generous, will not be compassionate, will not do you kind favors.

Second, Reagan was willing to allow negotiations to collapse. He did not panic when Moscow used its typical technique of bluster, threats, and intimidation. If the Soviet delegates wanted to get up and walk away from the negotiating table, Reagan let them do it. In the past, however, Americans would have made new concessions simply to keep the Soviets from walking away; this is what happened at the 1972 and 1979 SALT talks.

It was very different with Reagan. When Moscow gave Reagan the ultimatum that it would stop negotiating arms reductions with the U.S. if the U.S. deployed intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe, Reagan did not bend. He responded by deploying the missiles. Liberals in the U.S., and many experts at the State Department, were shocked by this. They said that Reagan would destroy the entire "arms control process." But Reagan said that if the Soviets wanted to walk away from the talks, then let them walk away. They would come back to the table, he said. And he was right. They came back. And they ultimately accepted the INF Treaty that the U.S. originally had proposed.

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Then remember what happened at the Reykjavik summit? There Gorbachev issued his ultimatum: there could be a dramatic arms reduction only if the U.S. would abandon the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI. Some previous presidents probably would have bowed to this Soviet pressure. American liberals were urging Reagan to do so. But Reagan again stood firm. He said again: Let the Russians walk away; they will be back. And again he was right. They have come back and they have resumed the START talks for deep arms reductions.

To you here in China all of this may seem obvious and simplistic. You long ago learned that you have to be strong and firm when dealing with Moscow. But this has not been so obvious to American presidents and to American diplomats in the past half-century. Reagan has set a very important example for future presidents.

The Reagan Doctrine

The Reagan Doctrine is a policy of true liberation. It recognizes that national liberation movements in the Third World can be on the side of freedom and democracy and that the U.S. can help these national liberation movements win. It breaks with the 1970s when the U.S. had become isolationist and was unwilling to remain involved in the world.

Instead, the Reagan Doctrine proclaims that the U.S. is ready to challenge and even roll back the Soviet Empire. This is what we did in Grenada. And this is what we are doing—and our countries are working together on this—in Afghanistan and Cambodia. And you should be working with us in Nicaragua. There, too, Soviet expansion should be blocked.

The Reagan Doctrine is a true revolutionary policy. It proclaims that the future belongs to democracy, not to Soviet-imposed dictatorships. And rather than being on the retreat, as they were in the 1970s, the world's democracies are now on the offensive. This is a marvelous legacy for Reagan to leave.

Demise of the Brezhnev Doctrine

For two decades, we in the U.S., in the West, and in Asia were told by Moscow that the global correlation of forces had shifted in the Soviet favor and that this shift was permanent. We often believed this. This, in effect, is what the Brezhnev Doctrine was proclaiming: that once a country joins the Soviet camp, it must remain forever in the Soviet camp. The most dramatic example of this, of course, was the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia 20 years ago.

We often believed the Brezhnev Doctrine. It seemed that it would be impossible for a nation to leave the Soviet camp. To this, however, Ronald Reagan said nonsense. This is the meaning of the Reagan Doctrine and this is the meaning of Grenada, Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. The message here is that the Soviets are not invincible. And the reality here is that Moscow has been on the retreat.

With this legacy, Reagan reversed the momentum of an entire generation. George Bush should continue challenging the Brezhnev Doctrine—and carry the challenge to Eastern Europe, to the Baltic states and even to the "republics" inside the Soviet Union itself.

Defense Technology with a Human Face

The Strategic Defense Initiative may turn out to be the most important Reagan policy because it could change the world. It could end the nightmare of nuclear holocaust.

SDI is a moral and humanitarian policy. After all, if government has any legitimate function it is to protect its citizens. This SDI would do.

SDI also is a policy that could end Moscow's ability to intimidate and blackmail the U.S. and the rest of the world. We all know the little secret about the Soviet Union. It is a superpower only because of its nuclear arsenal, its ability to destroy the United States. SDI would deny Moscow this ability. With SDI, the Soviet Union no longer would be a superpower. It instead would be seen for what it really is—economically and politically just a large Third World nation.

Of course, Reagan merely launched SDI. The program still has very far to go. We even may discover that SDI cannot work. Most likely, however, it will work. And if it does, the shadow of nuclear nightmare that has darkened the world since 1945 will begin to lift. Can there be any better legacy than this?

Restoring Confidence in the Presidency

Reagan's final legacy is that he reignited Americans' optimism and restored Americans' faith in the presidency. We had become very pessimistic in the 1970s. We saw one president after another fail—Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter. We started believing that America's best days were behind it.

The mood in the 1970s was tragic. It reversed two centuries of American thinking. The history of my country, as you probably know, has been a history of confidence and optimism. We have felt that frontiers are not limits or barriers, but rather that frontiers are to be conquered.

We have regarded our nation in the way that you often have viewed yours, as the Middle Kingdom, occupying the center of the universe. We have believed that the United States is a very special place, a promised land with a special mission. And we started doubting all of this during the dreadful 1970s.

There is a new dynamism in America. Ronald Reagan once again has proved that capitalism works—that free market economics succeeds.

Ronald Reagan reversed and healed this. He did this by his policies, by his successes, by his personal example and optimism, and by his inspiring words.

We've already discussed his policies and successes. Now we must note the example he provides as president.

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Unlike Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter, Ronald Reagan was not destroyed by the presidency. He was not ground down. He enjoyed being president; he was comfortable being president. This has helped Americans regain their confidence in the presidency.

SDI is a policy that could end Moscow's ability to intimidate and blackmail the U.S. and the rest of the world.

Touching American Hearts

And then, of course, there are Ronald Reagan's words. I am not sure how they will sound to you, with your very different culture and history. But Reagan has invoked words, thoughts, and images that have touched American hearts and have recalled a special pride we long had in our country.

Frequently, Reagan talked about America as a promised land. He called America a "Zion in the wilderness," and "a city on the hill." He said often, in speaking to Congress or on television addressing the nation, that America is "the last best hope of man on earth."

You may remember what Reagan said at Fudan University when he visited Shanghai in 1984. He said: "We're an optimistic people. Like you, we inherited a vast land of endless skies, tall mountains, rich fields, and open prairies. It made us see the possibilities in everything. It made us hopeful."

These may be only words, but they are words that have been combined with dynamic action and successful policies. And thus, these words have been powerful and have had a powerful influence. George Bush is lucky to find himself leading a people again confident in America and again proud of America.

This then is the legacy that Ronald Reagan leaves his people. It is an impressive legacy. It is a marvelous legacy.

And it will influence the direction and policies of America for years to come. ☎

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How Great Was Ronald Reagan?

Our 40th President's Place in History

A Symposium

How will President Reagan be most remembered? How, if at all, has he changed American politics and government? Has he been one of America's great presidents? Has he been a conservative president? To what other presidencies might the Reagan administration be compared?

These questions were put to seven leading political historians and presidential biographers.

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE

A funny thing happened to Ronald Reagan on the way to his place in history. At the three-quarter point, he made a sharp left turn, then another, and ended his journey going in the opposite direction from his start. Initially, he was headed towards the title of the toughest Cold War president of all. His rhetoric was bellicose in the extreme, as "evil empire" replaced detente. When martial law descended on Poland, Reagan tried to organize an economic blockade of the Soviet Union. On the military front, he launched the greatest arms race in history, topped by the single most expensive weapons system ever undertaken.

But history will remember Reagan as the first Cold War president to preside over eight years of unbroken peace, the first to reach an arms reduction accord with the Soviets, and the American president who helped make it possible for Mikhail Gorbachev to begin the process of restructuring Soviet society.

Historians will also stress the gap between Reagan's domestic goals and his accomplishments. Most obvious is the deficit; what he promised to eliminate he has allowed to swell beyond comprehension. On the social agenda, abortion remains legal, prayer in the schools illegal. Reagan's failure in the war against drugs and related crime activities is so great that drugs were the number one issue in the 1988 presidential campaign.

Nevertheless, Reagan will be remembered as the president who reversed the decades-old flow of power to Washington. By dismantling some federal programs, and reducing others, he forced the states and the cities to assume more responsibility for running their own shows. If he failed to break the Democratic hold on Congress, he did force the Democratic Party to move to the right. When Reagan entered politics 22 years ago virtually every Democrat outside Dixie identified himself, proudly, as a liberal; today, in large part because of Reagan, almost every Democrat in the nation tries to call himself a conservative.

Bid for Greatness: Tax Reform

These are important changes, but not of such a magnitude to earn Reagan a title of "great." The great presidents are the ones who bring permanent changes in society. Teddy Roosevelt and conservation and trust-busting, as one example, or Woodrow Wilson and the Federal Reserve System, Franklin Roosevelt and Social Security, Harry Truman and the integration of the armed forces, Dwight Eisenhower and the interstate highway system, Lyndon Johnson and Medicare and civil rights.

Reagan's bid for greatness is tax reform, and on this one it is just too early to tell. If the doomsayers are right and we are dragged into a depression by the deficit and the trade imbalance, Reagan's tax policy will be reversed and forgotten. If the optimists are right and the economy continues to grow, the new tax rates will become permanent and Reagan will be blessed for his wisdom and courage.

Like Ike and JFK

Comparing Reagan to other presidents produces mixed results. He has been very like Jack Kennedy in a number of ways: cutting taxes to stimulate the economy, accepting large deficits in order to step up the pace of the arms race, indulging in Cold War rhetoric. He has been like Dwight Eisenhower in a number of ways: talking tough while maintaining the peace, using the CIA's covert capabilities rather than the Armed Forces' overt firepower to support his policies in the Third World, using a show of force rather than force itself in the Middle East while attempting to maintain an even-handed policy toward the antagonists. Reagan has also been very like Eisenhower in his tremendous personal popularity, as well as in his inability to use that popularity to promote the Republican Party.

Therein lies the biggest difference between Reagan and Nixon. Many people admired Nixon, almost no one

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ever liked him. Almost everyone likes Reagan, although not so many admire him. Every scandal in the Nixon administration came home to stick to the president; the Reagan administration's scandals have been more numerous, and in the case of Iran/Contra, more serious, but none of them have stuck to the president.

Whether that was just plain dumb luck or brilliant politics Reagan's biographers will argue for a long time to come.

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE *is a biographer of Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon.*

M. E. BRADFORD

One political era most differs from another in the language used by those in power. We know that a watershed is coming when that language starts to change. We are now hearing a new idiom in the speech of public figures, one in sharp contrast to the language that originally defined the Reagan Revolution. That speech was a universe of discourse, a network of rhetorical questions, assumptions, normative terms, and modifiers that has given the last 10 years an identifiable momentum. Even though the sitting vice president was chosen to be president in November, this now-familiar political idiom will not long survive the changing of the guard. About the promise of individual liberty and responsibility, we will hear less and less; about the benevolence of government, more. The thought of such subtraction makes us self-conscious about what we will lose. Thus, these remarks are openly valedictory of the rhetoric of the Reagan presidency, the eloquence by which we were so securely environed.

Reagan reaffirmed with eloquence the continuing validity and vitality of the American Dream. In this more than in any policies or decisions lie his legacy and enduring claim to greatness.

—George H. Nash

And very soon this will be the attitude of most conservatives, however frequently we have lost patience with President Reagan while he has been in office.

For all things change when the expectations generated by political discourse shift. In recent months, conservatives have argued that tax reform and tax cuts have made it difficult for politicians coming after Reagan to postulate the necessity for creative spending; to insist that government, if properly concerned for the unfortunate, should throw money at social problems. For a time I shared that opinion. Now I doubt its validity. Leftism is a virus in the bloodstream of our body politic, present in authoritative appeals to tolerance and peace, fairness, charity, and a natural right to the property of others. It will not go away. It has a ground in envy and resentment, which are the fashionable modern responses to eminence and distinction of every kind.

The Left in Disguise

Yet the political success of Ronald Reagan has forced the contemporary Left to disguise the intransigent emotional core of its worldview behind talk of heart-rending circumstances and imminent disasters, which by reason of their severity cancel every consideration of means or ends. Assuredly, the task that President Reagan set for himself has not been completed. The practical consequences of his triumphs have been adumbrated by continuing Democratic power on Capitol Hill, by a press overwhelmingly on the left, and by the timidity of too many of his servants. We must remember that he was allowed to govern for only one term. The rest has been a holding action, undercut by concern for respectability and by a preoccupation with the "judgment of history." Nevertheless, because of Reagan, no serious national politician now wishes to be identified simply as a "liberal." Facing President Reagan, leftists prefer to be described as "competent" and "compassionate." Beyond such partial characterizations, they deal only in personalities, in the dark arts of vilification, or in the outrageous allegation that Democratic omnibus continuing appropriations prove Republican fiscal irresponsibility.

This president has taught those who share his politics how to conduct a national campaign—how to give limited government, strong national defense, and a check on inflation mass appeal. He has shown us how to do this with a high heart and good humor, making conservatism an optimistic creed. Moreover, he has put to rest forever the old axiom that no candidate for the presidency can run as a conservative and be elected. Finally, with the counsel of Attorney General Edwin Meese, he has compounded these achievements by choosing judges who will defend the Constitution as it has not been defended in over 50 years. These appointments are this president's greatest accomplishment.

I leave aside the effort of the Reagan administration in Central America, its role in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf. They involve business that is far from complete. Along with much of the Reagan agenda, their disposition must wait upon his legitimate successors: those who will go forward with implacable determination regardless of the enmity that confronts them. Ronald Reagan will be remembered for the initiatives he set in motion with his anti-statist rhetoric, and for changing through such language the current of our politics almost as dramatically as that current was changed in 1932. The most popular of our modern presidents, he has in his virtues and personal style symbolized our national character, not necessarily as it is, but as we wish it to be.

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in the American Revolution; A Worthy Company: Brief Lives of the Framers of the United States Constitution; *and other books and essays on American history and southern conservatism.*

ALONZO L. HAMBY

After Ronald Reagan has endured the usual biographical cycle of bunk, debunk, and rebunk he likely will be remembered as an outstanding national cheerleader. If such an assertion sounds disparaging, it should not. In the Media Age, rhetorical leadership has become one of the presidency's most important functions. In part through hard policies but even more through his skills as a communicator, Reagan has successfully lifted the morale of a nation that in 1980 was wallowing in pessimism and uncertainty. Long accustomed to the spotlight and the microphone and understanding the way in which the media magnifies one's personality, Reagan has turned what was a liability for most of his predecessors into an asset of major proportions.

Scholars and others with a large view of the world will remember him also as a participant in a transnational movement against the excesses of the regulatory/welfare state, whether overtly socialist (as in much of the world) or marginally social-democratic (as in the United States). It seems doubtful, however, that they will consider him the outstanding political leader and conceptualizer of the return to free market capitalism. That honor will be reserved for Margaret Thatcher, a political captain of notably greater will and tenacity.

It is in the realm of the substantive rather than the symbolic that future generations will raise the greater number of questions about Reagan. Their ultimate judgment probably will be that like most American presidents he wore his ideology lightly and was more notable for his flexibility than for his dogmatism.

Was he conservative? Sure, but not a "hard" conservative. Clearly, he has done little about the social agenda of the Cultural Right other than make an occasional speech stating an opposition to abortion and/or affirming traditional Christian values.

Reagan has largely had his way on economics but with policies that do not fit well into traditional definitions of economic conservatism. Many observers, not all of them liberal, argue that in the long run we will pay for a prosperity set in motion by massive budget and international trade deficits. Reagan's defenders may confound (or simply infuriate) them by invoking Lord Keynes' dictum that in the long run we are all dead. It remains to be seen whether the American economy is capable of generating the output to cover our internal and international debts with little or no pain.

It is notable, moreover, that even in the realm of economics Reagan has taken the easy path rather than the hard one. For all his rhetoric in favor of a balanced budget, he has consistently refused to fight for one. Instead, he has rather easily acquiesced in one of the worst tendencies of democracy, its cupidity. Despite the incessant rhetorical handwringing about the plight of the poor, the vast bulk of federal "social programs" involve some sort of subsidy to the middling groups in American society. It is, no doubt, a realization of this situation and along with it a basic political survival instinct that has caused the administration to back away from programmatic hit lists.

Pandering to Popular Appetite

Reagan ran up against a popular appetite for federal benefits without parallel in our history. He and the people around him were able to deal with it only by pandering to it. The Ronald Reagan who announced that the elderly will receive an increase in Social Security benefits whether or not inflation runs high enough to trigger it is hardly the leader of a counterrevolution. One wonders what historians will make of all the talk of a conservative era in a decade when federal social spending actually increased.

Reagan has left the nation stronger, more prosperous, and more confident than he found it. Yet it will be difficult to argue that he has achieved greatness.

—Alonzo L. Hamby

It is even harder to determine how they may classify a man whose foreign policy has meandered all over the ideological spectrum and has run in qualitative terms from the steadfast defense of the American nuclear presence in Europe and the liberation of Grenada to the muddled Reykjavik summit and the shabby arms-for-hostages dealings in Iran. That said, it is a pretty sure thing that most historians will approve of the recent moves toward detente with the Soviet Union, in part because most historians are liberal but also because if present indicators hold up, Reagan will have done the right thing. (One wishes, however, that he could have found a better way to go about it than tinkering with the nuclear balance.)

Has he been a great president? Let us begin with the acknowledgment that at the very least in the short run, Reagan has left the nation stronger, more prosperous, and more confident than he found it. Unless sometime in the next several years we fall victim to a catastrophe that can be convincingly traced to his policies, it will be hard to rate him a subpar chief executive. Yet it will be difficult even for those in sympathy with him to argue that he has achieved greatness.

Disconnected Administrative Style

It is clear now that his administrative style has been not simply "detached" but virtually disconnected. It is well for presidents to avoid obsession with detail and to keep their eyes on the larger goals, but Reagan exemplified the

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opposite extreme to a fault. He too often appeared indifferent not simply to detail but to the personnel who managed his presidency, not just ill informed but positively removed from the world of policy execution.

He does not seem to have made much change in the large patterns of American politics. If he has temporarily changed the momentum of American foreign and domestic policy, he has not posed a frontal challenge to the assumptions of the Great Society, nor has he established a new majority. Public opinion surveys that record a widespread pessimism about the future may show that even his achievement as a morale booster has been superficial. He has sustained himself politically by taking the easy way out on the tough issues. Ideologues may call this cowardice; political professionals will characterize it as prudence. In either case, it may have been the price of self-preservation in assuming the leadership of a people who want to avoid difficult choices. What it is not is an indicator of greatness.

Reagan will be remembered as the president who reversed the decades-old flow of power to Washington.

—Stephen E. Ambrose

As for comparisons: Reagan has been an uplifter and rhetorician comparable to the two Roosevelts and Wilson; a conservative exponent of capitalism in the tradition of Coolidge and Eisenhower; a cold warrior and advocate of U.S. international leadership akin to Truman, Kennedy, and Nixon. These analogies demonstrate the skill and strength of a political leader able to draw on diverse themes and weave them together into a formidable personal coalition. Whether he has left something more durable remains for all of us, especially George Bush, to see.

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FORREST MCDONALD

Forecasting history's judgment of a presidency is a tricky business. In addition to lacking the perspective that time alone can provide, we are impaired by two features that inhere in the office. The first of these is that the presidency is dual in character: the president is head of government, which is an administrative and managerial function, and he is also head of state, which is a ceremonial, ritualistic, and symbolic function. Our tendency is to judge the president, while he is in office, largely in terms of the latter, and therefore personality weighs heavily. Scarcely a generation need pass, however, before personality is forgotten and other criteria come to bear. Accordingly, such presidents as Lincoln, Wilson, and Truman, whose personalities were far from charismatic and who were regarded as failures by most of their contemporaries, can come to be regarded as great; and the likes of William McKinley and John F. Kennedy, immensely popular when in office (and for a brief time after their martyrdom), can subsequently come to be viewed as ciphers.

The second feature arises from the lame-duck syndrome. During his first term, the president and the members of his party in Congress, looking forward to the support they can provide one another when seeking reelection, tend to cooperate effectively. After the president is reelected, the bond of reciprocal dependency is dissolved; and besides, the president, who is almost invariably returned to office by a greatly increased majority, tends to regard dealing with Congress as beneath his dignity. The president thus moves toward overseas adventuring, where his hands are relatively free, and congressmen of both parties are progressively estranged from him. At some point during his second term he becomes fair game for the most vicious attacks from politicians and press alike, and scandals (real and bogus) become commonplace. This is not something that began with the presidency of Ronald Reagan, or even with those of Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson. It is the fate suffered by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, and almost every other two-term president. But as time passes, the attacks are forgotten and the achievements (or failures) in foreign policy tend to determine the president's niche in history.

Prophet or Silly Ass?

Bearing these considerations in mind, one can rise above the provincialism of the present in appraising a presidency, but there is yet another difficulty. Whether history will regard Ronald Reagan favorably or otherwise will depend in large measure upon the course of history yet to come. This is not always the case. Presidencies that are devoid of significant achievement, such as those of Franklin Pierce and Jimmy Carter, are unlikely to be reevaluated later, and the same is true of calamitous presidencies such as those of James Buchanan and Warren G. Harding. But with active presidents, Reagan among them, the verdict of history is likely to be many years in the coming.

It seems entirely probable that the judgment on Reagan will turn mainly upon two pivots, his domestic economic policies and his negotiations regarding nuclear disarmament. Conservatives have been greatly disappointed in his economic policies, believing that deregulation and the cutting of income taxes have not gone nearly far enough and fearing that the budget deficits portend disaster. But if the economic systems of the world continue to move toward depoliticization and the primacy of the market, if prosperity continues to attend that trend, if the budget is brought under control without a new round of worldwide inflation, and if the time bomb that is Social Security does not explode, Reagan will be regarded as the man who led America out of the abyss of

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socialist stagnation. These are admittedly large ifs.

The returns on that aspect of his presidency will be in fairly soon—within a generation or so. Those having to do with nuclear disarmament might take longer, especially if Mikhail Gorbachev manages to stay in power. If the various reactionary elements in the Soviet Communist Party can oust Gorbachev, as they would love to do, Reagan will look a silly ass for having changed his mind about the evil empire. If Gorbachev by some miracle manages to pull off his perestroika, Reagan will be made to seem a prophet and a great force for world peace.

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GEORGE H. NASH

It is not difficult to identify the principal initiatives for which Ronald Reagan will be remembered. After a decade of national defeatism and doubt, he strode into office in 1981—confident of America's ideals and promise, and of the ability of his countrymen to conquer their malaise. He instituted startling tax-rate reductions and other measures that have produced (his supporters argue) the longest peacetime economic expansion in the history of the United States. In foreign policy he initiated a massive rearmament program to contain Soviet imperialism and expounded America's democratic faith without shame. In doing so he broke, without fully dispelling, the debilitating grip of the "post-Vietnam syndrome" and the mentality of "blame America first." In the realm of social issues, he set out deliberately to curb the "imperial judiciary" and reorient a left-leaning Supreme Court.

Not all of his accomplishments were so programmatic.

Perhaps equally significant is the fact that during the Reagan years principled, articulate conservatives gained unprecedented access to executive power and to the nation's policy-making elite. The Reagan Revolution of 1981 was not a conventional shift in legislative priorities and personnel; it was an intellectual challenge that undermined the sanctity of the status quo. It did not overthrow that status quo; Reagan never had the votes—or perhaps the intent—to do so. But his administration for at least a time altered the terms of public debate and tarnished the intellectual pretensions of social democracy. In these subtle but influential ways Reagan altered American politics more than he did public policy.

Contingent Legacy

Contemplating this substantial legacy, I am nonetheless struck by how tentative and contingent it remains. Is the economic boom of the 1980s, for example, a healthy phenomenon for which Reaganomics may take credit, or is it (as critics maintain) a false prosperity built upon the quicksands of debt? Events during the next few years will tell—and will thereby color our judgment of the Reagan record. Similarly, was the revival of American military strength and morale in the early '80s a lasting achievement or only a fleeting spasm in a dreary saga of declension? Here, as well, the post-Reagan era will inform us. So, too, for the Supreme Court; all that Reagan has done to reshape it could quickly be undone in the next presidential term. And despite the entry of conservatives into the Washington mainstream, the Reagan Revolution is not yet institutionalized. To a considerable degree, then, Reagan's place in history will depend upon the deeds of his successor.

If all this creates uncertainty about our 40th president's eventual niche in the history books, another factor is likely to embroil him in extended controversy. For Ronald Reagan, like Woodrow Wilson and Abraham Lincoln before him, has been guided in office by a compelling moral vision. Because he has been a principled (and not merely managerial) chief executive, Reagan has profoundly antagonized those who espouse competing social visions—notably the New Deal, Great Society, and New Left. He has threatened their intellectual hegemony and sense of superiority, much as FDR threatened those Republicans of his day who considered themselves America's natural aristocracy. As custodians of a regime under powerful ideological assault, Reagan's adversaries have a vested interest in disparaging his presidency. For this reason alone, his standing at the bar of history will long engender passion. Such is the fate of those who delegitimate (but do not overturn) the status quo.

To those who grumble that he has not reconstituted the political economy of Herbert Spencer, one can only say welcome to politics and welcome to America.

—James Nuechterlein

Eisenhower's Augustan Age

How, then, will Ronald Reagan go down in history? As a conservative Roosevelt who redirected America's course for half a century? As a second Coolidge of liberal caricature who fiddled while the economy burned? As a benign, Ike-like grandfather who ruled for an insignificant interlude during America's inexorable march toward socialism? As a rejected prophet like Wilson whose vision triumphed only after his death?

My own hunch is that an Eisenhower analogy may be the closest one—although not the analogy dear to yesterday's liberals. A generation ago, when Eisenhower left office, he was widely disdained by "the best and the brightest" as an aging golfer whose presidency had brought little but stagnation. It was time, his youthful successor asserted, to "get America moving again." The

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sequel was the hubris and tragedies of the '60s. Only now, a generation later, have historians begun to perceive Eisenhower as an effective, "hidden-hand" executive who governed during what in retrospect appears an Augustan age.

Will historians someday gaze similarly on our own decade and its dominant public figure? No one can say.

One can't help wondering how much more he could have achieved had he been a more forceful, involved chief executive.

—Karl O'Lessker

But I do venture to predict that our 40th president will be adjudged a singular statesman, and for a reason few of his critics understand. As the finest political orator of our era, Ronald Reagan reaffirmed with eloquence the continuing validity and vitality of the American Dream. In this more than in any policies or decisions lie his legacy and enduring claim to greatness.

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JAMES NUECHTERLEIN

It has been Ronald Reagan's extraordinary political gift to be at once a unifier and a constructive polarizer. Polls have registered his ability to make a substantial majority of Americans feel better about both themselves and their country. At the same time, he is no Eisenhower, bringing people together behind a genial moderation. Genial, yes; moderate, not really at all. During the 1930s, conservatives hissed Franklin Roosevelt at the newsreels while liberals looked on him with something akin to worship. Fifty years later, Reagan has reversed those patterns of appraisal.

Those who question Reagan's conservatism or wonder whether he has made a genuine difference lack a sense of historical perspective. He has accomplished nothing less than a fundamental change in the terms of debate of American politics. The Democrats, it is true, presently show signs of revival—no political mood lasts forever—but they have achieved recovery only by carefully distancing themselves from the liberalism that is their presumed reason for being. They have been reduced to responding to the president's agenda rather than setting their own.

Startling Accomplishments

Consider Reagan's accomplishments. He has restored the American economy (a president's single most important domestic responsibility) even as he has frustrated the Left's ambition to transform the welfare state into the redistributive state. More generally, he has revitalized faith in private enterprise, the work ethic, political freedom, and the dignity and responsibility of the individual; he has, in short, reestablished a consensus on the basic principles of democratic capitalism that define the American experiment. On all the major social issues—abortion, quotas, gay rights, feminism, crime and punishment, the family, moral and religious values—the Reagan administration has been conservative and correct, even if reasonable people might quarrel over details of policy and political strategy.

In foreign affairs, the record is mixed, but it should not be forgotten that Reagan has kept the peace, rebuilt America's defenses, and exhibited, at least on occasion, a vigorous understanding of the national interest (no imaginable Democratic administration would have undertaken the Grenada operation). He has labeled the USSR for what it has been, an evil empire, at the same time that he has understood the need to establish sober terms of coexistence with it. His essential skepticism toward the Soviets has not blinded him to the possibility that in Mikhail Gorbachev we may be dealing with a genuine departure in Soviet leadership. There have been great blunders (Iran/Contra most notable among them) but many of the administration's perceived failures have had more to do with the intractabilities of international affairs (and the fecklessness of Congress on foreign policy) than with errors in vision or execution.

Triumph of Personality

Reagan's leadership was, above all, a triumph of personality. His eloquence, charm, courage (recall his behavior after the assassination attempt), and remarkable sense of self revived Americans' pride in the presidential office and, by extension, in the nation itself. No president in memory has displayed so healthy an ego, and Reagan's most adamant political opponents concede his fundamental personal decency.

There was, it must be said, a considerable falling off since 1986. The loss of the Senate and the Iran/Contra fiasco have weakened the president and led to frustrations in both foreign and domestic policy. The administration has failed in Nicaragua (though that was by no means entirely its own doing) and faltered in Panama. The greatest domestic disappointment came in the defeat of the Bork nomination, where the administration stumbled tactically and failed to communicate adequately the essential principle at issue. (Americans must somehow be made to understand the necessity of judicial restraint to the preservation of our constitutional order.)

Still, except for those on the irreconcilable Right who dream of an American equivalent of the Bourbon restoration (dismantlement of the welfare state and reversion of Cold War attitudes to those prevailing circa 1953), Reagan's has been a record that conservatives can look to with no small feeling of approval and satisfaction. To those who grumble that he has not been everywhere successful and has not reconstituted the political economy of Herbert Spencer, one can only say welcome to politics and welcome to America.

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A great president? Probably not: there has been too much inattentiveness, too little intellectual grasp, some inadequacy of vision. (Reagan's celebrations of individualism too often leave the impression that it is not individualism-in-community to which conservatives should aspire but individualism as an end in itself.) But if not a great president, surely the most significant one since FDR. And perhaps the best-loved of all—which is not, ideologues to the contrary notwithstanding, a thing to be despised.

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KARL O'LESSKER

The achievement for which President Reagan will be most warmly remembered occurred the first year of his administration. It was the putting into place of fiscal policies, collectively known as "Reaganomics," that have produced the longest peacetime period of sustained economic strength in this century. The cornerstone of this policy was the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, which Reagan championed during his 1980 campaign and fought like a tiger to get through Congress the following year. To whatever extent the credit for any successful major policy can be attributed to one man, the credit for ERTA belongs to Ronald Reagan.

Far more important than its present impact on the economy, Reaganomics may well have caused a fundamental shift in the political community's approach to fiscal policy. During the past eight years (and, one suspects, for some years to come) there has been little if any disposition among congressional Democrats to advocate, still less vote for, big new spending or taxation programs.

Apart from partisan bleats about the poor, elderly, homeless, minorities, handicapped (as if these categories of unfortunates were created by Reaganomics), the one dark shadow that falls across the economic record of this administration is the federal deficit. Among economists there is hardly any consensus as to what the long-term consequences will be of the soaring national debt. My own inexpert view is that all those foreigners who are said to be financing our deficit are doing so not out of the goodness of their hearts but because they see this economy—deficit and all—as a splendid opportunity for productive investment. And that worldwide belief among hard-headed investors is more likely to be accurate than the doomsday prophecies of our own pundits.

Unfortunately, I find little else in the record of this administration that posterity is likely to applaud. What started out as a strong-willed, unillusioned policy toward the Soviet Union became in President Reagan's second term a rush toward "give-peace-a-chance" accommodationism.

In a related area, this administration has been given too much credit and far too much blame for the defense buildup. Allowing Mr. Reagan full marks for the large increases in his first two defense budgets, we need to bear in mind that the buildup actually began under President Carter and his excellent Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in the final year of the Carter administration and in the budget he left behind for his successor. The Reagan budgets accelerated the Carter increases but by no means charted a new direction.

The one program of transcendent importance that might stand as a monument to the Reagan presidency is the Strategic Defense Initiative—if it survives Congress. If it does not, however, some portion of blame will have to be assessed against Mr. Reagan himself because of his insistence on portraying the program as an impenetrable space shield using madly exotic weaponry to protect our cities rather than as a quickly deployable defense of our retaliatory forces. This ill-judged emphasis gave rise to the ugly and dishonest anti-Star Wars campaign, which may well prove to be the undoing of SDI.

All told, in my judgment as a conservative Democrat, President Reagan will be remembered more for the opportunities that slipped from his grasp than for achievements that reshaped the American political landscape. I don't at all mean to discount the enormous difficulties Reagan confronted in the form of a largely hostile Congress and virulent news media. A great deal of what he did accomplish against these odds is attributable to his own extraordinary personality, eloquence, and moral commitment. But one can't help wondering how much more he could have achieved had he been a more forceful, involved chief executive. Reagan has indeed been as conservative a president as we could realistically hope to have but not a great one. Greatness requires more than heartfelt good intentions and an occasional success.

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Completing The Reagan Revolution

Where Do We Go From Here?

William J. Bennett

When I accepted The Heritage Foundation's invitation to speak on "What It Means To Be a Conservative," we agreed that I would discuss the question, "Is Conservatism Optimistic?" Partly because Midge Decter addressed precisely this question so well a couple of weeks ago, and partly for other reasons, I want to address today a somewhat different topic—what I will call, "Completing the Reagan Revolution." But let me introduce this topic by briefly considering the first question—the question of whether conservatism is optimistic.

The answer to this question is: Yes. American conservatism today is optimistic. Or rather, it has become so. American conservatism has become optimistic—it has become cheerful and high-spirited and enthusiastic and forward-looking—thanks in the main to the leadership, the transforming leadership, of Ronald Reagan. Thanks to his leadership, American conservatism is now the party of the future, because it is the party of spirit, the party of energy and enterprise, the party of ideas.

The American people have renewed their commitment to our common principles; the task of cultural reformation and reconstruction has begun.

American conservatism now sets the terms of our national debate. It does so because, without in the least abandoning its principles, it has succeeded in identifying itself with the quintessential American appetite for new challenges and new opportunities. Under the leadership of Ronald Reagan, American conservatism has shed its skin of distrust and defensiveness toward the world in which we live.

It has overcome what once was a suspicion—even a dread—of the future. It has become vigorous, bold, assertive—in a word, fully Americanized. While contemporary liberalism has moved away from—in some cases, even against—the mainstream of American political life, today's conservatism is at home with the common sense and the common beliefs of the American people. As a result, where once conservatives resisted the future, they now view it as something to shape. And there is a good chance to do just that.

Forward-Looking Conservatism

Consider the changes in two areas in which President Reagan sought to bring about fundamental shifts in national policy—economics and foreign policy. In economics, enactment of the historic legislation simplifying the tax code and cutting top marginal rates nearly in half is an act of epochal importance. It signifies the utter eclipse of the old economics, mistrustful as it too often was of private enterprise, overly trustful as it too often was of government planning. A new understanding has set in of some old truths concerning the entrepreneurial sources of economic growth and well-being, and the role of government as a reliable and steady economic umpire. The practical reforms that have been achieved in the past five years—the practical successes we have had—rest on a real intellectual revolution, one in which, I might add, The Heritage Foundation has played an indispensable role. And just as the failed ideas of the past underlie the spirit of malaise which President Carter apparently thought our national condition, so this intellectual revolution justifies the optimism with which we face our future.

Foreign and defense policy is the other main arena in which the Reagan Revolution has, of necessity, focused its energies. And here, too, I believe, we have succeeded in fundamentally overturning the self-indulgent pessimism of the 1970s. In fact, if the president had achieved little else, he would have secured forever his place in American history for his undeviating commitment to the

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rebuilding of our nation's defenses—the absolute precondition of our ability to conduct a sound foreign policy of any kind. Then there are the successes in Grenada and El Salvador, the historic opportunity represented by the Strategic Defense Initiative, and the new realism concerning the threat of Soviet and Communist expansion, not least in Central America. In light of such tangible achievements as these, it seems to me fair to say that we have turned a corner. To put it simply: the United States as a nation is becoming a stronger force in the world arena. What is more significant, we understand once again why it is important to be strong. Once again we acknowledge the necessity of acting energetically to defend our interests and our values in a dangerous world. For no less than in the economic sphere, the great success of the Reagan Revolution in foreign and defense policy reflects not just particular changes in discrete policies, but rather a transformation in our underlying sense of what America is and what it can accomplish. In effecting this second transformation, the role played by Heritage has again been vital; and on this front as well, American conservatism under the leadership of President Reagan has created grounds for optimism about the future.

Continuing the Revolution

More remains to be done in these areas, of course; more remains to be accomplished. The Reagan Revolution is not complete. But conservatives do not expect completion or perfection in the things of this world. Just as, when in the wilderness, conservatives knew that there were no lost causes, so they know, while governing, that there are no causes finally and irrevocably won. It will be the task of future presidents and administrations—and of the American people as a whole—to sustain, enhance, and extend what this administration has done to secure our economic well-being and our national security. But that the accomplishments are real and that we are now on the right path—this much is clear.

It is worth pausing for a moment to ponder what a peculiar revolution the Reagan Revolution has been. True, we seem to have broken with the past, or at least the immediate past. And true, we look forward with fresh expectation to a future of our own shaping. But this has been a revolution presided over and executed by conservatives—which means that it has been accomplished not by abandoning but, to the contrary, by recovering and conserving fundamental institutions, fundamental principles, and fundamental truths. Indeed, it is precisely by reinvigorating our commitment to these principles and institutions and truths that the president has fostered in Americans in general, and in American conservatives in particular, their new sense of optimism and confidence.

Thus it must be as well in the areas that still need to be addressed if we are to complete the Reagan Revolution. National wealth and military strength are necessary means to national greatness; but they are not, of course, sufficient. As the president has observed, "A nation's greatness is measured not just by its gross national product or military power, but by the strength of its devotion to the principles and values that bind its people and define their character." National greatness, in the end, depends on—is embodied in—the character of our people. This in turn depends on these things: first, on our sense of who we as a nation are and what we believe in; second, on the well-being of the institutions we create to express those beliefs; and third, on the values according to which we shape the next generation of Americans. And it is here, in the somewhat amorphous but nonetheless palpable realm of beliefs and attitudes and values, that an effort of national recovery must be mounted if we are to realize our potential as a people.

The meaning of the Reagan Revolution extends beyond tax reform and a stronger defense to a recovery of our national purpose, a strengthening of our social bonds, a reaffirmation of our common cultural beliefs.

Clothing the Public Square

Now on this front—on this moral and cultural front—there are also grounds for hope. In fact, it may be that nothing the president has done is more important than his achievement here. In his evocation of our national memory and symbols of pride, in his summoning us to our national purpose, he has performed the crucial task of political leadership. Moreover, he has done this precisely when many were wondering whether such presidential leadership was still possible. If, as the president has said, "In recent years, Americans' values almost seemed in exile," no public act has been more significant than his welcoming them home. The American people have renewed their commitment to our common principles; the task of cultural reformation and reconstruction has begun.

But the task has only just begun; the triumph is nowhere near complete. Far too many decent Americans remain, in effect, on the moral defensive before their own social and cultural institutions. Can Americans be confident that our children are likely to inherit the habits and values our parents honor? Are we confident they will learn enough about our history and our heritage? Are we confident they will be raised in an environment that properly nurtures their moral and intellectual qualities? Can we be confident in the cultural signals our children receive from our educational institutions, from the media, from the world of the arts, even from our churches? Are we confident that our society transmits to our young the right messages—teaches them the right lessons—about the family, about drug use, about respect for religious beliefs, about our meaning as a nation and our responsibilities as

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individuals? Is the public air conducive to moral and intellectual health, or do we have cause for worry as we contemplate the future well-being of our families, of our children, of our fellow citizens?

This is a very large topic, and I cannot do it full justice here. Let me simply say this: I am confident—I am certain—that the vast majority of parents have only the best, the soundest and most sensible hopes for their children. Most do their best as individuals and families to make those hopes a reality. But as a society, we some time ago lost confidence in our right and our duty to affirm publicly the desirability of what most of us believe privately. It is this confidence we must regain. We allowed the public square to become, in Richard John Neuhaus' term, "naked"; we allowed our social and cultural institutions to drift away from their moorings; we ceased being clear about the standards which we hold forth and the principles by which we judge, or, if we were clear in our own minds, we somehow abdicated the area of public discussion to the forces of moral and intellectual relativism.

As a result, we do our best individually; but as a society we have much to worry about when we consider the context, the environment, the public ethos in which we raise our children. And we are right to worry, because we are in this together. As we learn in Plato's *Gorgias,* no man is a citizen alone. Individuals and families need support, their values need nourishment in the common culture, in the public arena.

Remembering the Answers

About 15 years ago, Harvard professor Nathan Glazer entitled a book of essays *Remembering the Answers.* His point was that in the 1960s we forgot—many willfully rejected—the most basic and sensible answers to the first questions, to the questions about what contributes to social well-being and prosperity, about what makes for individual character and responsibility.

Surely when parents send their children to college they have a right to expect the colleges to take some measures to protect their sons and daughters from drugs.

Well, thanks to the president and many others, we have begun to remember the answers, and we are no longer too timid to speak them out loud. On fundamental issues of individual character and responsibility, on the role of social institutions like religion and the family, on the common purposes of our national life, we have come a long way in the last few years. But it is the work of more than a few years to reinvigorate and renew and restore our common culture. This work is not primarily the work of government. But it is work that those of us in government must be attentive to and supportive of, work to which we can contribute in careful and limited ways. It is a work of supreme importance. Jimmy Carter ran for president promising a government as good as the American people. Ronald Reagan has given us a government worthy of the American people's respect and trust.

Today's conservatism is at home with the common sense and the common beliefs of the American people.

But are our social and cultural institutions worthy of the American people? Do they promote the qualities and habits and values that we would wish? If they do not, we need to see to it that they are reformed. This task requires appropriate government policies, but it goes beyond government; it represents the completion of the reforms that have already been undertaken.

Let me give three brief examples of the failure of our institutions to fulfill our hopes as individuals, as parents, as citizens.

Teaching Our Heritage

First, our children need to learn about our nation—about our history, our heroes, our heritage, our national memories. They need to learn this not simply in order to have pride in our nation but, as Leszek Kolakowski put it in his Jefferson Lecture, because to "learn history [is] to know who we are"; it is to learn "why and for what [we are] responsible"; it is to learn how this responsibility is to be taken up. A recent survey of parents, residents, and teachers in Arlington, Virginia, provides evidence that Americans care very much that their children know who they are, for what they are responsible, and how this responsibility is to be taken up. Arlington parents want their children to learn why America is distinctive (79 percent wanted a "great degree of emphasis" put on America's distinctiveness, 0 percent wanted only a "little emphasis"). Arlington parents want their children to develop basic citizenship skills (79 percent vs. 4 percent); and Arlington parents want their children to study historical periods (70 percent vs. 6 percent), chronological facts (88 percent vs. 6 percent), and geography (62 percent vs. 10 percent). But do our youngsters know what they should know? Is our history a living tradition, a mystic chord of memory, for us today, as it was for our forefathers? We spend far more on education than ever before. We are exposed, through the media, to a heretofore unimaginable variety of messages and information. We enjoy cultural opportunities beyond the dreams of generations past. But are we confident that the principles of the Founders, the traditions embodied in our institutions, the memories of our sacrifices, the examples of our statesmen will be alive in the next

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generation's minds and hearts? I do not think we can be as confident as we should be.

Government has a role here—especially the localities and states that govern our public schools; and the national government has an important educational part to play as well—through speeches, reports, recommendations, recognitions and ceremonies, through the dissemination of ideas and the setting of a national agenda, as well as funding for various enterprises. Individuals have an even more central role—at home, and in voluntary associations. But above all, we as a society, as a common culture, have to respond to the call of our national history, and to the responsibility it imposes upon us of instilling in our children an informed appreciation of American principles and American practices. The variety of ways in which this can be done will become clearer once we rise above all the pseudo-sophisticated claims and counterclaims, all the educational cacophony and cultural confusion, and decide: yes, we need to know our national experience, so as to know our national purpose.

Reaffirming the Family

A second example is the family. This is our most important social institution. It is perfectly clear that its decline has been disastrous for many of our youth.

I shall be brief, as I recently devoted a whole speech to this topic. Let me say this: As individuals, most of us believe in the family; we want strong families; we presumably want government policies that help families; we want our educational and other cultural institutions to support the family; and we try ourselves to foster habits and to embrace practices that strengthen the family. Yet, as a society, we are distracted by so many currents and cross-currents that we tend to lose sight of these basic goals. And while we earnestly try to help our young people, we tend to lose sight of this basic fact: without strong families, many of our other efforts will be in vain.

Now there may be no simple answer to the question of how to strengthen the family. But prior to any discussion of ways and means must come the simple unapologetic public affirmation that the family is an absolute value, and that heroic measures are justified in preserving and strengthening it. As a polity, as a society, as a culture, we now send, at best, mixed signals about this—and we get mixed results. In the rates of youth drug use and crime and lesser forms of irresponsibility and waste of talents and opportunities, we see the human cost of those mixed signals and mixed results. It is a cost we should resolve to bear no longer.

Clearing the American Mind

A third and final example is drugs. The Department of Education is releasing a book and announcing other initiatives that will help parents and school personnel to get drugs out of our schools. Here, once again, government has a definite role to play, and individuals and families have an even greater role to play. But, with the recent deaths of young athletes in mind, let me also ask this: what of the role of our cultural institutions? Our colleges and universities often, and sometimes quite properly, call to task the rest of society for failing to live up to its stated ideals. They set themselves the role of moral gadfly, moral conscience. But what of them? Surely when parents send their children to college they have a right to expect the colleges to take some measures to protect their sons and daughters from drugs.

I made this simple point to the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges in March 1986; the colleges and universities have a basic responsibility to care for the moral and indeed the physical well-being of their charges. I said, "All colleges must protect students from certain influences—drugs, criminals, fraud, exploitation." "Specifically, for example," I continued, "parents should be able to expect colleges to do their best to keep pushers off campus, and get drug users and cheats, frauds and exploiters off campus, if they are already there. Parents expect colleges to be positively and publicly and actively against these things. Parents do not expect colleges to be neutral as between decent morality and decadence." And for saying this I was criticized for sounding like "a small-town PTA president" and for being "simplistic." Well, if our academic and cultural institutions have become so "sophisticated" that they have forgotten their elementary duties and responsibilities, then it is time for us to call them back to first principles and responsibilities.

It will be the task of future presidents and administrations—and of the American people as a whole—to sustain, enhance, and extend what this administration has done to secure our economic well-being and our national security.

To be specific, every college president should write his students this summer and tell them this: "Welcome back for your studies in September; but no drugs on campus. None. Period. This policy will be enforced—by deans and administrators and advisors and faculty—strictly but fairly." Such a policy could in fact be enforced. It should be enforced. And no parent or taxpayer would object if such a policy were announced and carried out. It would be good for our youth, good for our society, and good for institutions of higher learning. But putting in place such a straightforward policy would require a kind of reinvigoration of our institutions, a resumption of their basic responsibilities.

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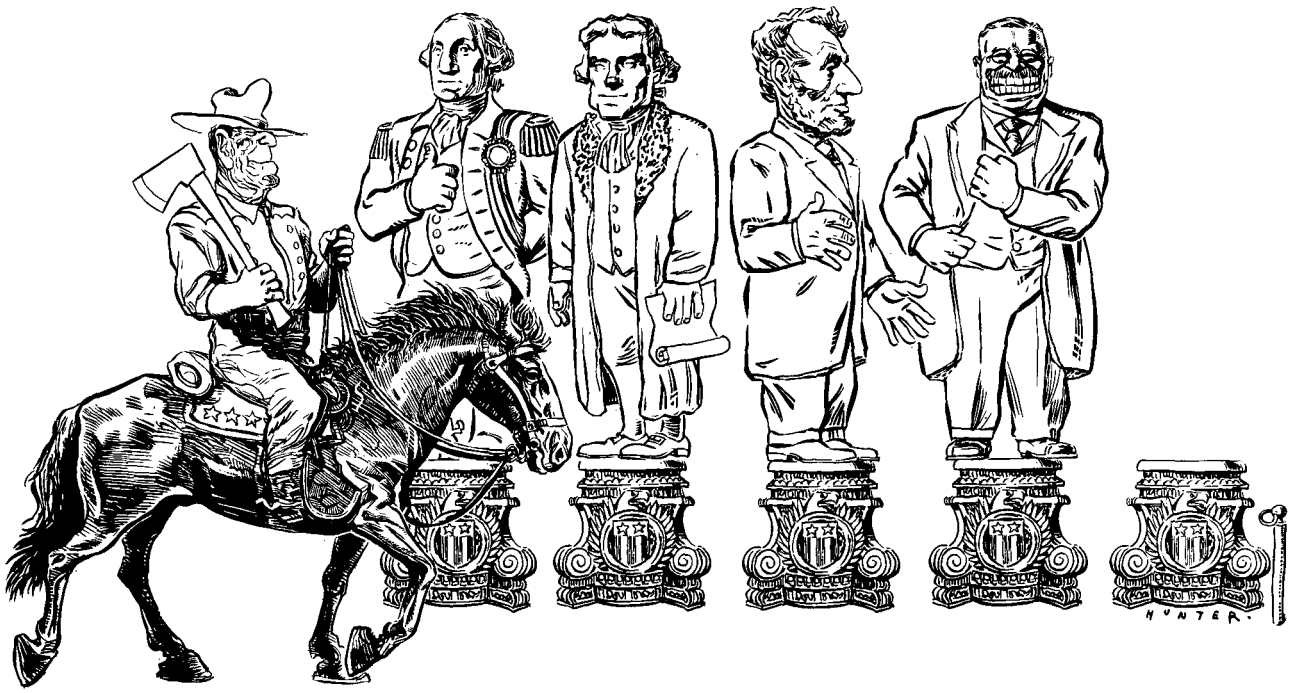
Recovery of a Great Nation

Such a reinvigoration of our institutions and a resumption of responsibilities has, I believe, begun in America. The meaning of the Reagan Revolution extends beyond tax reform and a stronger defense to a recovery of our national purpose, a strengthening of our social bonds, a reaffirmation of our common cultural beliefs. This is a task that goes beyond politics, let alone the politics of one administration. Yet, it cannot be accomplished without support from the polity. To borrow a phrase from an earlier era to which the president is fond of alluding, completing the Reagan Revolution means embarking upon a national recovery act. It means fashioning, in traditional but also novel and imaginative ways, support for the social and cultural and, yes, the moral fabric that in the end makes possible true greatness, in nations no less than in individuals. In this effort of national recovery, today's generation of Americans, joining a conservative preference for the tried and true to a newfound willingness to embrace the innovative and the bold, face their own rendezvous with destiny.



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On the Sandinistas:
Contra military commander Enrique Bermudez charged in POLICY REVIEW that "the Sandinistas have played the United States for a fool." *New York Times*

On Jeane Kirkpatrick:
In a POLICY REVIEW interview Jeane Kirkpatrick said: "The single most important change in my views in the last decade has been a much greater appreciation of market economics." *John Chamberlain, King Features Syndicate*

On Our Judeo-Christian Heritage:
In POLICY REVIEW Rabbi Joshua Haberman said that the bulwark we have against tyranny in this country is our firm belief in God and our firm belief in some standard of authority above government. *Pat Robertson, "Candidates '88 with Marvin Kalb"*

On the Evil Empire:
Picking up from President Reagan's phrase "evil empire," POLICY REVIEW's article, "Seventy Years of Evil," encapsulates some of the grimmer episodes of Soviet history. It is important reading. *Boston Globe*

On SDI:
Bob, you've talked about support for SDI, but you wrote in POLICY REVIEW that you would use it as a negotiating chip. *Representative Jack Kemp to Senator Bob Dole, NBC Presidential Debate*

On Republican Party Politics:
Jack Kemp elaborates the anti-establishment conservative case in POLICY REVIEW: "Despite its smaller size, only the activist wing can set the direction for the whole [Republican] party." The "establishment wing" is merely interested in "managing the status quo." *Sidney Blumenthal, Washington Post*

On Conservatism's Parched Grass Roots:
Amy Moritz wrote in POLICY REVIEW that the current state of the conservative movement is weak because in most cases leaders don't call on the millions of grass-roots activists except for financial contributions. *Washington Times*

On Media Bias:
ABC-TV reporter Rebecca Chase admitted that network producers, hell-bent on locating dire hunger, asked her "to scour the small towns of Mississippi to find hungry people . . . but I couldn't find any," she said in POLICY REVIEW. *Fred Barnes, Reader's Digest*

On the Family Farmer:
From "family farmer" Blake Hurst's article in POLICY REVIEW: "We don't really like accepting subsidies. But if we didn't enroll in government farm programs, our corn would be worth $1.80 a bushel; because we participate, we receive $3. Everybody has his price. Now you know ours." *Wall Street Journal*

On Crime and Punishment:
[In POLICY REVIEW Charles] Colson, former special counsel to President Nixon, makes a pretty good case for alternative sentencing, including restitution to victims of nonviolent crime. *William Raspberry, Washington Post*

On Angola:
Savimbi's strategy, as he outlines in POLICY REVIEW, is " . . . to raise the costs of the foreign occupation of Angola until the Cubans and the Soviets can no longer bear the burden." *Norman Podhoretz, Washington Post*

On Anti-Communism:
POLICY REVIEW . . . is the organ of the Heritage Foundation—the brain center of the most rabid reaction. *Pravda*

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policy REVIEW

Reagan reaffirmed with eloquence the continuing validity and vitality of the American Dream. In this more than in any policies or decisions lie his legacy and enduring claim to greatness.

George H. Nash
How Great Was Ronald Reagan?

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